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THE COMMITTEE appointed by Herbert Hoover to investigate the charges by the Navy League that the President exhibited "abysmal ignorance" in dealing with the navy and that "at every turn" his efforts were intended to "restrict, to reduce, and to starve the United States Navy" has reported with great celerity. As was to be expected, the committee gave to the President a clean bill of health. It convicted Mr. Gardiner, president of the league, of numerous misstatements, notably in connection with the charges that Mr. Hoover entered into secret agreements with Prime Minister MacDonald on the occasion of the latter's visit here; that he refused to allow even an executive session of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee to see "the full record of its [the Administration's] negotiations and possible commitments" prior to the London conference; and that the President intended in connection with the one-year naval holiday to forego the construction of 87,000 tons of ships now being built. Mr. Hoover will doubtless be gratified, especially since Admiral Rodman was a member of the committee and so offsets to some degree the two Hoover office-holders on it, Messrs. Jahncke and Castle. We ourselves have no doubt that any sane, intelligent committee not composed of big-navy maniacs would find for Mr. Hoover, although he has done far too much for the navy to suit us and has shown at times a fear of the jingoes unworthy of his office. We sincerely hope the matter will not rest here. We should like to see a committee of the Senate, headed by Senator Walsh of Montana, probe into the whole question of this pestiferous Navy League, the source of its funds, its relations to naval officers, and kindred matters. Let us have light on this organization which presumes to dictate its naval policies to the American people.

TWO MYSTERIES continue to becloud attempts to analyze the situation in Manchuria. First, to what extent is the civilian Japanese government, which speaks for Japan at Geneva, Washington, and Tokio, in control of the Japanese troops who act in the name of Japan on the mainland of Asia? Second, have Japan and Russia a secret understanding, and if so what is it? Upon the answer to the first depends judgment of Japan as a responsible member of the family of nations. Upon the answer to the second depends, in large part, the peace of the world. But no very cheerful answer to either question is possible. Either the Tokio government has been deliberately deceiving the Western world, or it is not able to control its generals, in which case it is hard to see wherein Japan can claim superiority, as an agent of "law and order," to the bandit generals of China. It was the local military who began the Japanese action; apparently they continued and expanded it in violation of definite orders from Tokio; presumably they were responsible for the temporary advance beyond the Nonni River, threatening the Russo-Chinese railway across North Manchuria, a movement which seems now to have been abandoned. One must assume, too, that they have dictated the shifting attitude of Japan at Geneva. Ten days ago Japan talked of withdrawing troops as soon as the present "emergency" was passed and of a desire merely to assure protection of its nationals.

NOW JAPAN IS SHOWING its hand. It has refused Chang Hsueh-liang, ruler of the Three Eastern Provinces, permission to return to Manchuria, and has insisted that he withdraw his troops south of the Great Wall. Then it has turned about and complained of a lack of functioning government in his absence! It has encouraged the establishment of subservient local "governments" supported solely by Japanese military force. And when these little groups of irresponsible individuals seize the salt revenues, as at Newchwang, and the League protests, Japan pretends to wash its hands of the whole business and say that it is an affair between two groups of Chinese! Japan says openly that it will not withdraw its soldiers until China explicitly recognizes the validity of the treaties embodying the famous and infamous Twenty-one Demands which Japan forced upon China under cover of the World War. A corrupt, Japanese-subsidized Chinese government unwillingly accepted them in 1915, after vainly appealing to the world for help; no subsequent Chinese government has ever recognized them except in so far as *force majeure* gave them the status of fact. Japanese statesmen and generals know that no government could accept them and remain in power in China. Yet the Tokio government now says that Japanese

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troops must remain in Manchuria until those "treaties" are respected. And Russia? Russia was silent when the Japanese began their advance, as Japan was silent when Russia slapped China's face in North Manchuria two summers ago. Russia is still, for Russia, mysteriously silent, though the Japanese have advanced to within ten miles of the great railroad which is owned jointly by the Russian and Chinese governments. It is, to say the least, strange. It suggests the possibility that Soviet Russia has, with Japan, followed the old imperial pattern of dividing weak provinces into "spheres of influence." The League of Nations, on the other hand, has acted with an energy which has surprised most observers. What it will do, now that Japan has openly defied its fiat, remains to be seen.

THE CONTINUED ADVANCE of wheat prices, followed by a sharp recovery in the prices of other agricultural products, an advance in silver, and a sharp rise in both the bond and stock markets, is a significant sign of a change in financial sentiment which may presage a broader economic recovery. Both wheat and silver are highly "barometric" commodities; it was their violent fall that foreshadowed the present almost unparalleled world depression, and it is therefore not unreasonable to hope that their present partial recovery may in time be followed by some improvement in general business. The collapse of wheat to the lowest price in three hundred years meant a drastic shrinkage in the purchasing power of the agricultural community; the precipitous decline in silver meant a violent shrinkage in the purchasing power of the Orient. It has been the prediction of many economists that a recovery would not come until a certain equilibrium had been restored in the price structure—until retail prices, rents, and costs of production had fallen, and until raw materials and agricultural products had recovered somewhat. Both developments have now been taking place to some extent, but both will have to go much farther before the existing deadlock can be broken.

RAMSAY MACDONALD'S fourth Cabinet is beyond doubt a distinguished one. There are eleven Conservatives, four National Laborites, three Samuel Liberals, and two Simon Liberals. The three members of the Labor Cabinet who followed Prime Minister MacDonald into the Conservative fold, Philip Snowden, J. H. Thomas, and Lord Sankey, become Lord Privy Seal, Secretary of State for the Dominions, and Lord Chancellor, respectively, with, among the Conservatives, Stanley Baldwin as Lord President of the Council and Neville Chamberlain, the most enlightened of his family, Chancellor of the Exchequer. The five Liberals are Sir Herbert Samuel, Sir Donald MacLean, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir John Simon, and Walter Runciman. The only real surprise, according to the press, is the appointment of Sir John Simon in place of the Marquess of Reading as Foreign Secretary. As the author of the Simon report, Sir John's appointment is not a happy omen for sorely troubled India. If it is not a Cabinet of all the talents, it is certainly a group of very able men. It now remains to be seen whether and for how long they can cooperate. Several of them are sworn free traders, notably Snowden and Runciman, and these men have undoubtedly been put into the Cabinet for the express purpose of acting as a brake on the tariff extremists in the Conservative group. But they are in a minority, and the question remains: How long will the Conservatives permit themselves to be led by the man whom they have been denouncing for more than twenty years as a most dangerous Socialist and extremist? We note that Prime Minister MacDonald spoke with great soberness when he returned to Lossiemouth. Not so reassuring, however, was his stressing the fact that there could be no definite plan or program just now and that the government would have to feel its way.

DR. BRUENING made a remarkable, and a remarkably encouraging, speech to the executive committee of the Center Party on November 5. Admitting frankly that the German government has repeatedly erred in its fiscal policies, the Chancellor declared:

> It is now necessary to open fully the books of German economy to the world. That is the best and strongest weapon of the government, and to forge it was the government's task during the last year. As a result the reparations question has already been seen by the world in an entirely new light.

He admitted that after the inflation Germany took money which it did not know how to use "and, what was more, did not appreciate what it would mean to pay it back." He is clear, however, that the time for further sudden and dangerous financial emergencies like that of last July has passed, and that the process of gradual and systematic reduction is under way. He promised that the "knife of the surgeon will be radically applied to the public household and private business to eliminate the remaining sore spots." He declared that the government's chief task now is to keep the country from splitting into two opposing camps, and that while it did not wish to perpetuate the present semi-dictatorial rule, it "needed time and freedom" to solve this problem of domestic peace and security. Fundamental business conditions he ventured to pronounce sound. We hope that he is right, but it is undeniable that the German situation remains grave and must continue so until some fundamental questions are solved. First of these is, of course, a definite settlement canceling reparations and debts.

SINCE THEODORE DREISER is heading a committee to investigate conditions in the mining counties of Kentucky, that unhappy and beleaguered section sees itself on the front page of the New York papers. This is all to the good, and Mr. Dreiser's public-spirited interest in unfortunate human beings is thus turned to excellent account. The Dreiser committee finds "a reign of terror" in Harlan County; it discovers that miners' children are starving, underclothed, and cold; that miners suffer from a dysentery that results from malnutrition; and that they are at the mercy of mine guards, sheriffs, county judges, jail keepers, and any other officer of the so-called law into whose hands they are so unfortunate as to fall. All these things have been told before, but they cannot be told too often. That Mr. Dreiser's income is $35,000 a year and that he gives none of it to charity was also told, but this information did very poor service as a smoke screen. The Red Cross has so far kept its lady-like hands off miners' relief because the wicked miners were all mixed up with industrial disputes and the Red Cross deals only in Acts

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of God. The State officers of Kentucky have ignored the tales from Harlan; the Harlan officers have pooh-poohed them. One can only fervently hope that Theodore Dreiser's name is well-enough known throughout the country to spread his story everywhere. If it makes the New York *Times* front page often enough, the Governor of Kentucky may have it brought to his attention.

A SIXTY-YEAR-OLD NEGRO of Snowhill, Maryland, sometimes called Orphan Jones and sometimes Yuel Lee, has been accused, by his own confession, of murdering a family of four persons for whom he had worked and by whom he had been discharged. A representative of the International Labor Defense got from Jones or Lee the statement that the confession had been obtained by third-degree methods and that he was actually innocent of the crime. Bernard Ades, a Baltimore lawyer, was detailed by the International Labor Defense to defend the Negro. Mr. Ades was set upon, with two associates, when he left the courthouse on November 4 and beaten severely by a mob which had thrice tried to lynch the prisoner. Returning to town after a day's absence, Mr. Ades attempted to be heard in the court and to get in touch with his client. Judge Joseph Bailey of the Circuit Court, however, refused to give him redress for the beating or to allow him any connection with the case. A special dispatch to the New York *Times* from Baltimore quotes the judge as saying he would not recognize Mr. Ades as counsel for Jones-Lee, because "no representative of an organization like that has any standing in court." Governor Ritchie has refused to intervene in the matter. The question, therefore, should be put up squarely to the American Bar Association. The International Labor Defense is an organization in good standing, whose political faith only a minority in this country share; nevertheless, it has, with due form, employed a member of the Baltimore bar to defend, in a perfectly regular way, a prisoner accused of murder. Judge Bailey, in refusing, for the reason he gave, to permit Mr. Ades to take the Lee case, was not only without his rights but reflecting discredit on the bench.

THE ROLE OF STOOL PIGEON is distasteful to honest men; in peace time the spy is merely another snooper, a betrayer of friendship, a traitor to confidence and fair-dealing. These melancholy reflections are induced by the story of Sergeant John Leonard of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Seven years ago somebody told Sergeant Leonard to get evidence on the Communist Party. It was, one assumes, a job to his taste, for he set about it in a thorough manner. He changed his name, he became such an ardent Communist that he was elected secretary of the Regina branch of the Communist Party of Canada, he worked with the party members as a fellow-official, he plotted with them, he gave them orders, and took counsel with them. A few days ago he washed off his false whiskers, put on his scarlet uniform once more, and appeared to testify against nine members of the party whom he had shown up in all their sanguinary hues. There are several interesting points in this story; one is that it took the Sergeant seven years to catch nine Communists. At that rate the bulk of the party would seem to be fairly safe for a considerable period. Another is that the Canadian Communists, discovered to be in practically daily communication with Moscow—by pigeon post, probably—were said by Sergeant Leonard to have received $3,000 from the terrible Russians. If the world revolution is to spend $3,000 to make nine Communists, the cost of revolutionizing the rest of us would seem to be almost prohibitive. The incident, therefore, is not without its humorous features. But when it is duly considered, there remains a very ill-smelling residue of betrayed friendship and dishonor to associates, the price of an unfortunate and certainly not too successful attempt to "get your man."

CHARLES U. BECKER, Secretary of State of Missouri, has had the kindness to send us a copy of his address delivered at the fifty-third annual meeting of the Indiana Republican Editorial Association. It is an excellent speech in many ways. He hits the press hard when and where it deserves to be hit—namely, for its effort to dominate government and for not always telling the truth and all the facts. But what challenges us most is the peroration of this remarkable address. As many of our readers are doubtless, like ourselves, in the habit of making public speeches, we cannot forbear sharing this peroration with them; it may be utilized freely by anybody in the speech-making business since it is not copyrighted. We venture to submit that anyone concluding an address in these words can never be accused of un-Americanism, unpatriotic doctrines, or disloyalty, whatever he may say in the body of his address. Here are these precious words:

> God raised up Washington and Jefferson and Jackson and Lincoln in times of urgent need. Each of them faced dark hours in national crises. Earth's immortals were discovered when the fate of nations was trembling in the balance. I believe the same God who heard Washington's prayer at Valley Forge gave us Herbert Hoover for this critical hour, and that history will write his name among those most precious to the hearts of the American people.

THE LATE THADDEUS H. CARAWAY was one of those picturesque Southern figures in the Senate which one regularly hopes may wholly disappear, though at this juncture one who seems to be a worse demagogue—Governor Huey Long of Louisiana—will shortly take his seat. Senator Caraway had much of the demagogue and poseur in him, affecting the broad-brimmed black felt hat of the South and the old-fashioned frock coat of statesmanship. He could orate for hours, often with much vitriol, usually with extreme partisanship; he utilized to the full the background of his "typically American" rise from boy farm-hand to railroad worker to book- and medicine-peddler to school teacher. Undeniably some of the ruggedness of the soil on which he had to work at the age of seven clung to him, and from that came his understanding of the problems of the poor whites of his State and section. For all that he lacked breadth and real leadership; he was true to type, intensely anti-Negro, and he knew well how to hate. But he deserves to be gratefully remembered for certain praiseworthy stands he took. He helped to initiate the Federal Farm Loan legislation; he vigorously supported disarmament proposals, and he called upon the Senate to investigate and brand the Senators who would profit by a wool tariff. Best of all, he never ceased to attack Harry M. Daugherty while that official was in Harding's Cabinet, and his fight on the Teapot Dome scandal was one of the best made in the Senate.

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Mr. Hoover's Notice to Quit

ONE thing the election of November, 1931, has conclusively proved: barring unforeseen contingencies and inconceivable blundering by the Democrats, President Hoover has received from the voters an unmistakable notice to quit at the end of his term. The tide that set in so strongly a year ago is running as strongly still. Who can question this in view of the unheard-of Democratic majority in New Jersey of 238,000—a change of 184,000 votes—for a weak candidate who swept out of office a Republican Governor; and the similar ousting of a Republican Governor in Kentucky, which Mr. Hoover carried by a majority of 180,000? That the vote was directed straight at the Hoover Administration was admitted with amazing frankness by the defeated Republican candidate in New Jersey, ex-Senator Baird himself. Surely no other interpretation could be put upon the overturn in the Eighth Michigan Congressional District, a seat held by the Republicans for thirty-three years, long almost the private possession of James W. Fordney, co-author of the Fordney-McCumber tariff act. That the loss of this seat has given the Democrats for the moment control of the new House of Representatives which meets next month is almost less important than that this rock-ribbed Republican district, containing many farmers, has turned to the Democrats. Beside this the retention of two other Republican seats, one of them that of the late Speaker Longworth in Ohio, by a majority five times as large as that of a year ago, is of no significance. And what happened in Connecticut, where the largest cities elected Democratic mayors, further confirms the drift to the Democrats—the Republicans ran behind the Socialists in Bridgeport.

The Republicans have the cold comfort of pointing out that the party in power invariably pays the price for bad times; this is true, as true in Germany and in England as in the United States. But no one who observes the situation can lay all this resentment of the voters merely to the industrial depression. Mr. Hoover himself has so deeply offended the voters as to have had the unfortunate and unprecedented experience of being booed on his last two public appearances. His picture when thrown upon the screen almost never evokes a single hand-clap. He has utterly failed to capture the affections or arouse the interest of the public. Not if the stock market should rise one hundred points and wheat go back to a dollar a bushel before November next, would he be able to win the confidence and affection of his fellow-citizens. They have tried him and found him wanting. Nothing but a Democratic alternative much worse than Mr. Hoover could return him to the White House.

If this is so much clear gain, the result of the election has none the less its bad side. The loss of the control of the House will afford Mr. Hoover an easy opportunity to place the blame upon his political opponents if little constructive should come out of the first session of the new Congress. Proof of this is already to be found in a dispatch of the chief Washington correspondent of the New York *Times*, dated November 4. He reports that it is "apparent that many Republicans, including some officials of the Hoover Administration, will welcome" a Democratic organization of the House because "they feel that with the Democrats nominally dominating the House that party will find itself in a position of responsibility for legislation likely to be productive of making errors which may not be pleasing to a large part of the electorate."

There you have the measure of the sportsmanship and the statesmanship of the Administration! The coming session is to be one of the most important in our history. Never did the Congress convene in a graver economic situation. There are issues to come before it of vital import not only to the United States but to the entire world. There will be a vast confusion of counsel, a multiplicity of proposed remedies, perhaps a bitterness not known for years, with the Democrats on their side destitute of program or capable leadership. And at this moment the Republican leaders desire only to sit back and let the Democrats make as many errors as possible. This the answer to the needs of the hour! This the way to go to the rescue of the ten million unemployed. It is a sound instinct indeed which makes the electorate rebuke such public servants as these. The only pity of it is that there is no worthy opposition to turn to.

Again, we ask the Republicans whether they are deliberately desirous of having their party commit suicide by renominating Mr. Hoover. One of the Progressive Senators was asked during the last weeks of Mr. Harding's life whether the renomination of Mr. Harding was inevitable. "Why, of course," was the reply, "do you think that there is anybody else in the United States who would publicly defend such an Administration?" On the same theory, perhaps, the renomination of Mr. Hoover may be justified; we can see no other. If the Republican leaders really permit it, they will show themselves to be stupider and more incompetent than had been believed. Yet when an alternative course is proposed to them, the reply is that there is no possibility of defeating Mr. Hoover because of his control of the office-holders who supply so many of the delegates to the convention, especially from the South. To this we respond that this is merely another reason for preventing the renomination of Mr. Hoover. The power to renominate himself through office-holders appointed by him is something that no President should ever have. There could be no more useful or important service at just this juncture than to smash this power once and for all. Senator Borah, we note, has been waited upon by a delegation which has offered him the financial support necessary to enter the primaries next year and make headway against Mr. Hoover. In the light of the election returns we feel that Senator Borah would need very little money to win State after State. But he is the great Progressive who is bold and courageous and outspoken only up to the moment when a political campaign becomes acute. Just this weakness has kept him from being the dominating figure in American public life today. A true and really brave patriot in his place would not hesitate for one moment. He would use all his power and his energies to keep from the White House a man who has brought to the party no distinction or success and to the country no leadership or relief.

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Economic Insanity

THE more one looks into the matter, the more amazed one becomes at the apparently overwhelming sentiment that has developed in Great Britain in favor of a high protective tariff. The satiric poem of MacFlecknoe which we reprinted in our issue of last week from the *New Statesman and Nation* seems less a caricature of the grotesque process of reasoning which has led to this sentiment than a sober picture of it. One can only assume that the long-continued economic sickness of Great Britain has driven the voters to a desperate state of mind in which they are willing to try any quack remedy suggested. The United States, they apparently reason, is—or was—a prosperous nation, and the United States has a very high tariff; therefore the thing to be done is to follow its example. True, we raised our tariff one or two years ago and conditions almost immediately became very much worse than they had been—but that is still the best explanation of present British psychology that we have to offer.

Immediately one begins to examine the question in detail, however, it becomes more and more difficult to see on just what goods a higher British tariff can be placed. In the twelve months ending September, 1931, total British imports amounted to £881,000,000. Of this amount £427,000,000, or almost half of the total, represented food, drink, and tobacco. The primary need of Britain is to feed her population; and she cannot seriously be intending to raise her own wheat and cattle, her own tea, coffee, tobacco, sugar, and oranges. Therefore we may safely assume that she cannot place a tariff on the items in this classification except the revenue tariff that already exists on tobacco, for example, and the revenue and protective tariffs that already exist on liquor.

The second classification of British imports consists of raw materials, which in the twelve months ending in September amounted in value to £183,000,000, or more than one-fifth of the total. Now these raw materials—cotton, wool, lumber, petroleum, rubber—are absolutely essential for the continuance of British industry; to cut down the amount imported would be directly to cut down British industry itself; wool and lumber can only be produced in England with comparative wastefulness, and most of the other products could not be produced there at all. We must conclude, then, that the British cannot be contemplating a tariff in this direction.

We are left with imports consisting of articles wholly or mainly manufactured as the only classification on which a tariff could be placed. Manufactured imports amounted in the twelve months ending September to £261,000,000, or less than 30 per cent of the total imports. But when we come to this section, we find that it is already to a very large extent protected, mainly by the so-called "safeguarding duties." Motor cars and parts, tires, gloves, buttons, gramophones, musical instruments, cutlery, clocks, lace, manufactured silk and artificial silk—all have to pay an ad valorem duty of 33 1/3 per cent, a duty which seems already reasonably high; and other articles in the classification—chemicals, for example—have to pay specific duties. Of course, as our own Congress has shown, a tariff rate is never so high that it cannot be jacked up higher. But assuming that the 33 1/3 per cent duties are raised to double that level, and that other tariffs are added on products not now covered, what is likely to be the result?

The first result must be to reduce the volume of manufactured imports. It is the belief of the British protectionists, of course, that British home industry will immediately expand because it will be called upon to supply the goods previously imported. For several reasons this belief is not likely to be realized. In the long run imports are the payment for exports, and exports must be ultimately reduced to the extent that imports are reduced. Though manufactured goods make up less than 30 per cent of British imports they constitute more than 75 per cent of British exports. Those countries which find their previous manufactured exports cut off by the British tariff will be compelled to try to sell their surplus in their own countries or in other countries, where they will probably displace a corresponding volume of previous British manufactured exports. But though this is likely to be the result, it is going to be difficult to convince the British protectionists, when it occurs, that it is their tariff that has brought it about. British exports, perhaps, will hold up in volume for some time after the higher tariff is adopted, first, because the depreciated pound in itself acts to stimulate exports, and, second, because the British may hold up their exports for a few years by taking gold in part payment and extending foreign loans.

The effect of the British tariff, in brief, will be to strike another heavy blow at world trade. As England, second only to Canada, is our best customer, the effect on our own trade is likely to be particularly severe. Under any conditions, but particularly under present conditions, for Britain to raise her present tariff would be a piece of economic insanity. But Americans must not forget which nation it was that started the world on its mad tariff course.

Business and the Y. W. C. A.

THE Y. W. C. A. has seemed to be one of the few religious organizations which have been effective in the labor field. It has been willing not only to pass beautiful resolutions, but on occasions to do something concrete for the workers. It actually printed a play written by the daughter of Harry Ward, indorsing unionization and the strike for social justice.

But recent events in the Y. W. C. A. in Rochester, New York, have been very disturbing. The Industrial Secretary, Miss Ethel Davis, working with the enthusiastic cooperation of over 200 working girls, maintained a forum to which, besides conservative speakers, she invited the secretary of the Socialist Party, William Hapgood of the Columbia Conserve Company, and A. J. Muste of Brookwood Labor College. Later she permitted her girls to produce Muriel Ward's play "On the Line." This play had been published by the Women's Press of the Y. W. C. A., had been approved by the national industrial staff, and was listed in their catalogue for use in industrial departments, but it supported the strike as a method of obtaining justice. The

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Rochester Chamber of Commerce made a vigorous protest against the play. The Y. W. C. A. finance-campaign manager, who is also head of the Community Chest, is reported to have said that if the facts regarding the meeting or the play got to Mr. Eastman of the Eastman Kodak Company, "he would not give a cent to the new Y. W. C. A. building," and that perhaps it would be better if the entire industrial department were abolished anyway, as it was jeopardizing the financial campaign of the association.

As a result of the protests, Miss Davis was finally asked to leave. The committee of the Board of Directors made the following statement:

> The Personnel Committee at its meeting on April 28 voted to recommend to the Board of Directors that Miss Ethel Davis, secretary of the Industrial Department, should not be asked to return to the Rochester association at the end of her present contract year. The committee wished to express its appreciation of Miss Davis's work as characterized in her generous giving of herself to the department, her devotion to a cause which she believes vital, her indefatigable study of industrial questions, her intellectual keenness, her capacity for friendship and ability to help individuals in difficult situations. In spite of these excellent qualities, however, the committee feels that it is unwise to ask her to return because of:
>
> 1. A lack of mutual confidence between Miss Davis and the Board of Directors,
> 2. Her personal handicap in a lack of emotional control,
> 3. Her lack of discretion in discussing professional matters.

The final vote of the board stood twenty-six to eight, and in the minority was the member elected by the industrial girls. Another resigned as a protest. Later eighty-eight of the girls enrolled in the Industrial Department signed a statement saying they would not come back to the association if Miss Davis was forced out. The general secretary, in explaining to friends on the staff what had happened, is reported to have said, "Miss Davis is a prophet and not a teacher, and Rochester has no room for a prophet."

Not content with the action of the local association, a representative of the business interests wrote to the National Board of the Y. W. C. A., and later appeared before them with three members of the board, protesting the circulation of the play "On the Line." It is reported that Mr. Eastman had previously indicated that he might give $250,000 to the new Y. W. C. A. building, and that after the play was given, he "made a protest claiming that the play 'On the Line' is strike propaganda and demanding that certain members of the National Board meet with several people from Rochester for discussion." At the meeting in New York the head of the Rochester Community Chest and campaign manager of the Y. W. C. A. presented Mr. Eastman's point of view. As a result of this protest, the National Board of the Y. W. C. A. for the first time read the play, and then agreed it should be withdrawn.

In the face of these facts, these questions should be asked: Is the Y. W. C. A. going to listen to the dictates of business interests and suppress plays which they have already indorsed and published? Is it not possible that just such action as this may make thousands of working girls lose faith that the Y. W. C. A. will really help them to a better economic and social life?

Edison and Immortality

IT was inevitable and proper that Thomas Edison should be instantaneously received into the American pantheon, but it is a pity that he had first to undergo that regularization which is commonly the fate of great men upon whom popular sentiment lays hold. In the days when he was doing his greatest work he was a lonely figure with a character of his own, but when his personality became one of the advertising assets of a great corporation he was press-agented in the best modern style and persuaded or compelled to fit into the picture. He selected a successor, he recreated the first electric light, and when he went fishing with Firestone and Ford the rotogravure editors were obligingly notified. But none of these things were so bad as those which have been done to him since his death. He has become not merely, or not even principally, a great inventor, but above all a spiritual leader, for it has been discovered that he was deeply religious at heart. This man who was in reality a type of materialism at its best has been handed over, whether he would or no, to preachers.

That his will left nothing to churches, to charity, or to education will count for nothing. Neither will the fact that he created something of a sensation not many years ago by expressing the dogmatic opinion that when a man died he was dead. For now his pious friends remember that he had changed this opinion and Henry Ford comes forward with the delightful opinion that "the greatest thing that has occurred in the last fifty years" is "Mr. Edison's conclusion that there is a future life for all of us." Surely this is a strange way to honor a great man. He devoted his life to the creation of instruments which only he could have devised, but he is chiefly important for an opinion which thousands hold and which was just exactly as weighty in his mouth as it would have been in the mouth of any one of the John Smiths who listen to his phonographs under the light of his electric lamps.

Whether or not Mr. Edison actually held this opinion we do not know and we do not care. He had exactly the same reasons for believing in or doubting personal immortality that everyone else has, and he was doubtless not exempt from the very human tendency to let hope count for more and more as death came nearer and nearer. But there are solid reasons why it is too bad that so much importance should be attached to so irrelevant a matter. If politicians kiss babies and Hollywood stars boast the simplicity of their family life, no harm is done. But it would be well if our scientists and technicians could encourage us to value a man for his real talents and to take his opinions on those subjects upon which he is really competent. We liked Mr. Ford better when he thought history was bunk than we do since he has become a prophet. As for Edison, he was an empiricist who had so little respect for theory that he does not seem to have taken the trouble to familiarize himself with even those general principles which would have shortened his labors. He learned everything he knew by the method of trial and error, and in view of that fact he would have been more consistent if he had consented to say only, in the words of another great American, "I expect soon an opportunity of knowing more with less trouble."

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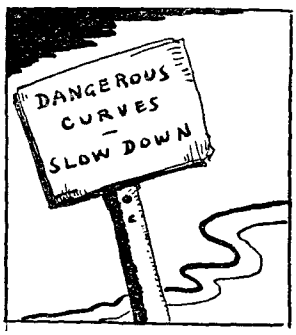
Speaking of Revolution . . .

By HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON



ALL historical prophecies are more or less futile. But we are in the midst of a "revolution." That means that everybody is talking. Why should we be the exception?

In the first place I think that this is really more of a social than an economic revolution. I hear it said on all sides that this present upheaval means the end of capitalism and I do not believe it. For even Russia cannot get along without capitalism. Russia is really a capitalistic country with this difference—that there the state has usurped the role played in other countries by the private promoter. Instead of seeing capitalism disappear from our world, amid the loud hoorays of the triumphant proletariat, I believe that we are only beginning to see the dawn of that strange and mysterious economic system which, even under its present stupid and wasteful and greedy guise, has done more for the general comfort and happiness of the average man than any of the other systems that have gone before. As long as such utter imbeciles as the great Sage of Detroit are allowed to have their say in the matter, and as long as "farsighted" banking geniuses with the mental vision of a new-born mouse are running things, I do not expect any lasting improvement. But there are others in the enemy's camp who are by no means deprived of intelligence. The present hopeless muddle may give them their chance. I think it will do so, and then at last we shall be able to discover whether capitalism is really doomed or not. Personally I see the present revolution merely as a prelude to the real reign of capitalism. But it will be a capitalism that is very different from the orgy of pawn-shop greed which for the last hundred years has so thoroughly disgraced all our public affairs. This may not be a very elegant phrase but at least the reader will know where I stand.

I think and hold it to be true that we shall see a return to an infinitely simpler form of life. The present state of civilization is entirely too complicated for the average individual, who will never be able to grasp more than two or three elementary facts at a time and who is completely lost as soon as he is asked to deal with questions involving the use of words of three syllables. Our pace is too fast for him. Our ambitions are too high for him. He does not want to be the president of the company for which he works. That is the sort of childish nonsense emanating from the old log-cabin-to-the-White-House school of history now rapidly going into the discard. All the average citizen asks for is "safety." He wants a little job of his own, a woman of his own, a few kids of his own, and perhaps an old car with which he can tinker after supper. Give him a short period of respite from working for somebody else, a two weeks' annual vacation, and he will be perfectly contented as long as he knows that he is "safe" and that his job waits for him when he returns. I think that we shall return to a much simpler mode of living and loving and eating and drinking and collecting those Immaterial Objects which the Brethren of the Advertising Guild have forced down our throats these last twenty years by dint of their eternal ballyhoo. This change will come about pretty abruptly.

I do not believe that any official disarmament conference will ever accomplish anything. The delegates to such conferences, recruited from among the old-school diplomats, will see to that. Armies and navies will tend to disappear because the soldiers and sailors are no longer able to take their jobs seriously. For the greater part of their time they are doing something entirely useless and unproductive, and they know it. Armies and navies will eventually disappear from the face of the earth just as the military orders of the Middle Ages have disappeared.

I believe that science will at last have the courage to bid theology remove its little playthings from the track of progress and go chase itself. Then at last there will be an end to the so-called Era of Good-Will between science and theology. The two are absolutely incompatible and always have been. I believe that the time is about ripe for such a declaration of spiritual independence. America will be the bulwark of theology because our people are largely recruited from the European middle classes and lack the mental and economic independence of the protelariat and the aristocracy. But in the end America too will have to follow suit. It is merely a question of time. We need not worry about it. It will come of itself.

I believe that we need not worry half as much as we do. This is not the first time the world has passed through an experience of this sort. We have had other "revolutions" and the world has never yet come to an end. There always was a younger generation which finally solved the so-called "hopeless" problems bestowed upon it by the fathers and grandfathers, solved them according to its own views but quite satisfactorily. I believe that the present younger generation is, on the whole, a great deal brighter and a great deal more intelligent than we, of the older school, have ever been willing to concede. And that is why I lose so little sleep about something that is now completely out of my hands and in the hands of my sons.

Finally, I believe that the old order of things is now almost as dead as the proverbial door-nail and that all efforts to revive it or keep it going are a mere waste of time and energy. I believe that we who realize this ought to warn our neighbors who still listen whenever Uncle comes for Sunday dinner and tells them about the good old times. And I believe that while waiting for the arrangements which the younger generation are about to make for our benefit, we might just as well go on living, more or less as we have always done. If these few ideas constitute a dangerous revolutionary program, then, my good banking friend, make the best of it. To me they seem merely plain, ordinary, common horse-sense.

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If I Were Dictator*

By STUART CHASE

I

IT is distinctly understood, I trust, that in this literary make-believe I am *dictator* in the bluntest sense of the word, unhampered by Congress, Cabinet, Supreme Court, the doctrine of States' rights, or similar checks and balances and democratic nonsense. The rules of the game provide, furthermore, that I possess a thumping majority of popular opinion. If the office is to be maintained by machine-gun, I quit. It is assumed that American farmers, workingmen, professional people, and industrialists (not to be confused with business men) want a change, and want it so badly that they are prepared to forego the sovereign right of the ballot, and to suffer a considerable margin of temporary inconvenience.

The first thing which I would do on taking up the reins, or the scepter, or the Big Stick, or whatever it is dictators take up, would be to inscribe over my desk, in a conspicuous location and in large black type, the following slogans:

Too Much Wheat and Not Enough Bread!
Too Much Cotton and Not Enough Clothes!
Too Many Bricks and Not Enough Houses!
Too Much Drudgery and Not Enough Jobs!
Too Much Goods and Not Enough Money!

The Economy of Abundance Has Technically Displaced the Economy of Scarcity.

And in red letters:

Mankind Is the Most Adaptable of All the Animals but Behavior Patterns Change Slowly!

It is assumed that your dictator has been appointed to meet a specific economic crisis, on the general order of the present one. His work therefore falls under two main heads. He has first to take steps for the immediate succor of human misery, steps overhasty perhaps, not completely mapped out, but *steps*. Secondly, he should call forthwith a planning council to prepare a long-swing program which hopefully may resolve some of the paradoxes which glower from his office wall.

II

I appoint my obedient cabinet, and forty-eight obedient State governors. All legislatures are dissolved; not a law is to be passed for an indefinite period. Ukases only. Rustics are guided through the empty Capitols as Russian peasants now boggle through the deserted splendors of the summer palace of the Czars. Administrative departments and bureaus are maintained intact, headed by sympathetic executives ready to carry the dictator's orders into immediate effect. (Soon they will undergo extensive reorganization.)

My first order is to abolish the protective tariff save in cases where a genuine infant industry, well adapted to North American economy, can be proved. Coincident with this step, foreign governments are urged to stimulate world trade by doing the same.

I then renounce all claim to further receipts on account of war debts, and respectfully request my brother dictators and parliaments to do likewise. They may or may not; I shall.

I then abolish the army and the navy, replacing them with a magnificent air force at, say, 5 per cent of the cost. This force I shall maintain only until Europe ceases to simmer. A stout and efficient federal police corps had also best be retained for future reference in domestic reforms. Profiteers and speculators will certainly fight these reforms with a ferocity as yet unknown. The disposition of the displaced soldiers and sailors we shall return to presently. The broken-hearted admirals and generals had better be deported with a pension for life. They will never be happy here, and they might cramp my style from time to time. The behavior of jobless generals in Mexico I have observed to be thoroughly mischievous.

I lose immediate revenue on the tariff but more than make it up on the army and navy. The budget, however, needs additional revenue. I instruct the Treasury Department to put the war schedules of income taxes into operation with just a shade more emphasis on the higher brackets. I am strongly disposed to take all inheritances which exceed one million dollars, but I shall curb my impatience until the planning board reports. A million dollars ought to be enough to ruin the second generation almost as effectively as the more fantastic figures now obtaining. I also have it sinisterly in mind to come down on all personal incomes of more than $100,000. That sum should be sufficient to keep an American family in modest comfort. Back of this drive, of course, is an attempt at better distribution of national income in order to maintain purchasing power at healthier levels. The cry will be raised immediately that all initiative and progress will fly the country. Fortunately I need only smile and point to Russia, which has achieved more progress and developed more initiative on $125 a month, the official party salary, than any other nation has ever dreamed of in an equal period.

Which reminds me that I must recognize Russia at once, grant her long-term credits duly safeguarded, sell her a billion dollars' worth of American goods in the next twelve months, and thus give the depression another sock in its estimable nose.

I shall cause to be issued from $3,000,000,000 to $5,000,000,000 in Prosperity Bonds, for the purpose of immediately utilizing a million or more unemployed on public works. As I understand it, the blue-prints for the useful expenditure of huge sums are already in the files of the federal engineers, and work may be started any day without waste or lost motion. Highways, waterways, public buildings, power-site development, flood control, afforestation, slum clearance, construction of great recreational centers—these will be among the chief projects. The chemical division of the sometime army I shall turn loose on the mightiest war against insect pests and parasites any nation has ever known. Bugs, beetles, bacilli will be driven to the last ditch with flame and gas and

* This is the first of a series. Articles by Glenn Frank, H. L. Mencken, Harold J. Laski, and others will appear in successive issues.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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poison. The remainder of the army and navy will be apportioned, so far as they care to take the jobs, among the other reclamation services. Mr. Benton Mackaye will be invited to prepare plans at once for a great series of townless highways, the only sensible method of coping with the traffic problems of a country motor mad.

Your dictator will move at once to the inauguration of a system of unemployment insurance so designed that only a brazen liar can attach to it the term dole. In fact, it would be a good idea to give dole shouters a little vacation among the beautiful mountains of Alaska. Their lack of originality grows increasingly fatiguing. We propose a self-sustaining, self-respecting, scientific system based on the soundest of actuarial methods. It must be integrated with a network of federal employment exchanges, and ultimately with vocational clinics to direct men and women displaced by machinery to new jobs.

Since it will take some time to get the system functioning, immediate relief must be provided for those who are not absorbed by the public-works program. This federal relief will supplement local relief; and no American family will be permitted to fall below a certain minimum standard of living, say $30 a week. For those too proud to take it, arrangement will be made to loan them the money against their status in the coming unemployment-insurance system. When they secure a job they may retire the loan and help the insurance reserves thereby.

Needless to say, these loans, distributions, and pay rolls for public works will add enormously to popular purchasing power, and so assist the recovery of industry as well as mitigate the plight of the unemployed. The effect on the federal budget will not disturb me in the least. The United States borrowed some $15,000,000,000 for destructive purposes in 1917 and 1918 and soon afterwards embarked on a great prosperity joy ride with surplus governmental revenues which were positively embarrassing. We can borrow up to $5,000,000,000 for constructive enterprises and necessary human relief without a qualm. At least, I can. We shall have a bit of a nest egg, furthermore, in the new supertaxes on incomes and inheritances.

Closely interlocked with the insurance project will be a complete system of old-age pensions. Payments on this account would hardly start to function until the immediate crisis is past. I shall take early steps, however, in withdrawing from industry all children under eighteen, putting them back in school, and making their jobs available to the adult worker. An intensive study will at once be launched into the varieties of work which the older man is best equipped to handle. This nonsense of firing at forty must cease without further ado.

Next I shall throw open the files of the Bureau of Standards to the general consumer that he may learn how to secure his money's worth. The knowledge which now permits the government to be the canniest purchaser in the market—knowledge for which the consumer pays—will then be his. This will be hard on the adulterator, the shoddy maker, the jerry builder, the price booster, the faker who relies on astute advertising to put his gadgets across. Such concerns must either mend their ways or go to the wall. Either course will be all right with me. But the honest producer will be deluged with new business. The net effect will be to cleanse and strengthen the industrial structure, while wiping out some billions of waste in advertising and competitive selling. I think I shall use the cream of the displaced salesmen on a great publicity campaign for public health and sanitation. The others will have to report to the exchanges and secure a useful job on the new housing projects or the new super-power system.

Wine and beer will be made legal as well as desirable commodities. This will operate drastically to reduce the bootlegging industry and take much of the habit-forming compulsion out of racketeering in general. While we must plow deeper to remove the economic causes which are responsible for the phenomenon of the racket, I shall not wait for nature to take its course. The flower of the ex-army, the ex-navy, and the ex-marine corps will be picked to declare immediate war on the gangster, to invest every great city, and by any means, military or civil, to drive him to immediate capitulation or death. He is just as ugly a cancer in our social life as unemployment. Of the gunmen who escape alive, the youths I shall put in special schools and strive to recondition their habits; the veterans I can waste no further time upon. Their reconditioning is too expensive a matter. Hopeless cases will be placed on a large, roomy, uninhabited island, together with all the surplus stocks of government munitions, especially bombs and firearms, and bidden to go to it in one last grand fusillade. Nor will there be any babies on the sidewalks of that island.

III

For the long-swing program I shall invite such persons as Wesley C. Mitchell, J. Russell Smith, R. G. Tugwell, George Soule, W. R. Ogburn, Grace Abbott, William Z. Ripley, Robert Lynd, Paul Douglas, Leo Wolman, Sidney Hillman, Charles A. Beard, Owen D. Young, Frances Perkins, John Dewey, Senators Norris and La Follette, Clarence S. Stein, Ralph E. Flanders, Walter Lippmann, Walton Hamilton, Bernard Baruch. If any candidate develops serious symptoms of rugged individualism, Hoover model, I will throw him out. Needless to say, every person appointed, including your devoted dictator, is a ramping, stamping individualist so far as ideas and behavior are concerned. A prime reason for economic planning in the future is that the going structure so thwarts and limits our personal integrity and liberty.

This group of perhaps one hundred persons will be divided into the proper subcommittees and asked to prepare a comprehensive plan for the permanent liquidation of too much wheat and not enough bread and the other paradoxes upon my wall. One is inclined to place in the agenda of the several committees such subjects as these:

1. The coordination of all basic industries into state trusts, under government supervision but operating as independent units so far as possible—utterly removed from bureaucratic control. Present security-holders to exchange their shares for new trust shares with dividends limited to, say, 8 per cent. The set-up to approximate the present organization of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, a well-managed, profitable, research-guided, national monopoly with no serious problems of overproduction, limited markets, unemployment. Such trusts are particularly needed in oil, coal, iron and steel, electric power, meat-packing, textiles, lumber, railroads. The Sherman anti-trust law is of course declared a piece of antiquated timber. One of the

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early duties of the oil trust will surely be to scrap three filling stations out of four, and to put every oil field on a wasteless engineering basis.

2. Federal incorporation of all companies beyond a certain size—say $1,000,000. Full reports to be issued by them as a basis for a glorious system of industrial statistics, leading to wise measures of coordination, guidance, and control. For industries not included in the state-trust program, an integration through the agency of their several trade associations may well be in order. Mr. Benjamin A. Javitz should be summoned for advice on this score.

3. The wisdom, if any, of compulsory labor unions, and of setting a minimum-wage scale.

4. The best method to reduce working hours with every measurable growth in the technical arts.

5. The division of the United States into regional areas following natural boundaries. How to develop these regions as economic units with a somewhat greater margin of self-sufficiency than now obtains. How to stimulate their local traditions and arts.

6. How to speed industrial decentralization. This is perfectly consistent with the state trust in that the factories or stations within a given trust will normally be located all over the country.

7. How to speed and utilize industrial and commercial research. I think I shall make Mr. L. R. Smith of Milwaukee, the man who employs 600 engineers and 7 salesmen, chairman of this committee. And I am afraid the patent office must be broken wide open. One might protect the inventor but hardly the corporation which fattens on him. The day of trade secrets in an economy of abundance is done.

8. A special—very special—report on how to stimulate incentives. There are, you know, at least ten incentives besides speculative profit which cause *homo sapiens* to take off his coat and spit on his hands. A commission of psychologists will be dispatched to Russia to study the methods there in use.

9. How about splitting agriculture into two main divisions—industrial farming and individual farming; the former to concern itself with the great staple crops—wheat, corn, cotton—susceptible to mechanized mass-production methods; the latter to continue farming as a way of life with diversified crops and a large measure of self-sufficiency? The first might well go into the state-trust technique like steel and railroads, and be operated by skilled agronomists frankly as an industrial enterprise.

10. What is a feasible and workable scheme to control new investment so that it is not wasted in excess capacity or purely vicious projects?

11. What is to be done with that costly luxury the New York Stock Exchange? With the securities of the state trust not subject to speculation, its activities, thank God, will be necessarily and automatically curtailed. But a margin of mischief will undoubtedly remain. We must keep an eye on it.

12. From the bankers—or better from members of my board who understand banking—I shall want a rather specific plan for expanding and contracting credit so that purchasing power may be kept in alignment with production. So that Americans, in brief, may buy back what they make. It is to be hoped that some progress in the solution of this problem has been made by the steps already taken—the public-works program, unemployment insurance (as a buying-power reserve), free trade, heavy income taxes on the indecently rich.

13. Where, in the industrial structure, has free competition a legitimate function? In new industries, in luxury industries, in certain aspects of wholesaling and retailing, in certain service industries such as laundries? I shall ask that that line be drawn as rapidly as may be. It will have a profound effect on my whole economic policy. Free competition probably has its place, even in an economy of abundance, but hardly sprawled all over the bed.

IV

While the Planning Board is preparing its report—full time it must give, and well paid it will be—your dictator will, I fear, indulge himself in a few private ukases. These may or may not be pertinent to the solution of grave economic problems, but they will give him much personal satisfaction. After all, if one is to be a dictator, one might as well go all the way. It is a hard life and a few gleams of sunshine will be appreciated.

He will, then, inaugurate a nation-wide system of birth-control clinics with Mrs. Margaret Sanger and qualified physicians in command. He will establish sun-bathing reservations near all great cities, but the instant one of them turns into a nudist cult it will be summarily abolished. On and after a given date he will deport any citizen who places a signboard on a public highway. Designated hoardings at seemly locations will of course be permitted. He will incarcerate any pilot who so far forgets himself as to broadcast advertising matter from the air. A menagerie cage will receive those who seek to use the radio for advertising purposes. No tourist will be permitted to cross the Rio Grande without passing a comprehensive examination in comparative civilization, Mayan and Aztec history, and appreciation of the popular arts and handicrafts. Your dictator will forbid the manufacture of chewing gum, outboard motors, corsets, steam riveters, and derby hats. He will make it mandatory for men to dispense with woolen coats on hot summer days. He will appoint Mr. Gilbert Seldes the official Hollywood censor, and it will be a censorship not of morals but of art. His job will be to forbid vulgar and moronic films; to raise rather than to debase for profit the popular taste of Americans. Your dictator will tear down some twenty square miles of greater New York, plant it to grass and flowers, and give that suffocated city at last a chance to breathe. He will—but sterner matters call.

V

When the planning reports are handed in, I propose to set the recommended machinery moving as briskly as possible—with an eye still on the last motto above my desk. The best available executives will be secured at salaries running up to $100,000 a year, the top price. When parts of the mechanism jam—as they are bound to—I will scrap them instantly, and if no substitute is available, retreat to the old procedure, pending a better plan.

When everything is running as smoothly as one could hope, I will appoint a permanent board of managers, preferably from the engineering profession, and retire. But a pineapple doubtless will have retired me long since.

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Governor Olson of Minnesota

By J. O. MEYERS

St. Paul, October 23

WHEN revolt broke out in Minnesota last November and the citizenry voiced its regret at having succumbed to the Hoover propaganda of 1928 by electing a Farmer-Labor governor, its choice was acclaimed by the right wing as a victory for Moscow.

Nearly a year has passed since this ex-bootblack and ex-freight-handler carried the Farmer-Labor Party to victory with a majority of nearly 200,000 votes. Ten months have passed since the "reds" seized the Statehouse. But Minnesota to date is neither morally nor financially bankrupt. In those months Governor Olson, by his swift, direct, sure strokes, by the force of his personality, and by his courage, has accomplished more than did all the conservatives who preceded him during their long years in office. The Governor has made his blunders—chief of which has been his failure to eschew the use of the political favoritism that has marked the regimes of the two major parties—but these are far offset by his accomplishments.

Governor Olson's veto of the Metropolitan Sewage Disposal bill, calling for construction of a joint sewage-disposal plant to serve Minneapolis, St. Paul, and South St. Paul, has been his most courageous action. This measure, which was passed the night before the 1931 legislature adjourned, was promptly vetoed by the Governor (an attempt to override his veto failed). The measure came to be known as the "St. Paul plan." Backed as it was by the three newspapers of St. Paul, the St. Paul City Council, the St. Paul Association of Commerce, the Bureau of Municipal Research, and the packing interests at South St. Paul, courage was required to kill it. But Governor Olson, not content with having merely vetoed it, returned the bill to the senate with the simple statement that in his belief the measure was "unfair to the taxpayers of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and South St. Paul."

Whom, then, would it have benefited? The packers of South St. Paul. The plan would have allocated the costs of constructing and operating a metropolitan sewage-disposal plant to serve Minneapolis, St. Paul, and South St. Paul on an assessed valuation basis. Under that plan Minneapolis would have paid 62.7 per cent of the cost; St. Paul, 35.6 per cent; and South St. Paul, 1.7 per cent. The total annual charge to each city over a period of thirty years for costs of operation and amortization would have been: Minneapolis, $1,080,000; St. Paul, $610,000; South St. Paul, $30,000.

Figured on the basis of the amount of pollution which each city contributes to the Mississippi River (the figures were arrived at by the Metropolitan Drainage Commission after several years of study), the cost division would have been: South St. Paul, 9 per cent; Minneapolis, 57 per cent; and St. Paul, 34 per cent. The total annual charge under this plan for operation and amortization would have been: Minneapolis, $970,000; St. Paul, $595,000; South St. Paul, $155,000.

The packing industries of South St. Paul pay approximately 55 per cent of all taxes levied in that city; therefore under the St. Paul plan the packers would have paid but $16,500 a year, whereas under the plan which would have charged them actually for the amount of sewage they pour into the river the packers' annual charge would have been nearly five times that amount for thirty years, or $85,250 annually. The St. Paul plan vetoed by Governor Olson would have meant a net saving to the packers over the thirty-year period of approximately $2,508,000. It is no wonder that they maintained two lobbies in St. Paul hotels and wined and dined legislators in an attempt to push it through.

Minneapolis, forced to contribute the major portion of the costs under the St. Paul plan, naturally opposed it. But legislators from the rural districts and from districts adjoining the Mississippi River, who had been clamoring for years to have the river cleaned up, saw the St. Paul plan as the one most likely to succeed, and lined up with St. Paul.

When Governor Olson vetoed this measure which was opposed by Minneapolis, the St. Paul *Pioneer Press,* evidencing once more that splendid spirit of brotherly love that exists between the two cities, referred to him as "the Governor of Minneapolis." Mayor Gerhart Bundlie, a sincere but amateurish St. Paul politician (he speaks frequently at business-club luncheons and his speech is almost always on "The Legal Aspects of the Trial of Jesus"), immediately launched an attack on Governor Olson. He was joined by the St. Paul Association of Commerce. Nothing was too bitter for them to say about the Governor.

Other opponents of Mr. Olson pointed out that during the 1930 elections he had been weak in Minneapolis. They saw his veto purely as a political move, since Minneapolis, with a population of 464,356, would be of more importance to him politically than St. Paul, with but 271,606. But even such attacks cannot explain the $2,508,000 which he virtually wrested from the packers and gave to the taxpayers of the Twin Cities. Since the Governor's veto of the sewage bill the Twin Cities have been attempting to work out a sewage-disposal plan acceptable to both Minneapolis and St. Paul, excluding South St. Paul.

Although Governor Olson announced a contemplated inquiry into fraudulent advertising and the use of deceptive containers for foodstuffs, and another into violations of the State's anti-trust laws, only one inquiry has actually got under way, producing results before it was fairly started. That was the investigation which R. A. Trovatten, Commissioner of Agriculture (an Olson appointee), opened into alleged excessive profits made by ice-cream manufacturers. Simultaneously with Mr. Trovatten's announcement of the inquiry, ice-cream manufacturers declared an immediate reduction in the prices of ready-packed ice cream, which dropped from forty-five and fifty cents a quart to thirty and thirty-five cents in most stores.

Many of the reforms which Governor Olson advocated in his message to the legislature failed to pass—mainly because the conservatives who control the House of Representatives usurped the power in the upper house, seizing the reins of government from Lieutenant Governor Henry Arens,

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the dirt farmer who, as a member of Governor Olson's party, was carried into power with the youthful chief executive. On the opening day of the session conservatives, fearing the radical element that had come into the Statehouse, proceeded for the first time in the history of the State to deprive the lieutenant governor of all power by taking over the appointment of the powerful rules committee.

Among the reforms which the Governor proposed were the passage of appropriate legislation designed to remove the inequalities between independent merchants and chain stores; the repeal of the vicious Brooks-Coleman Act, which took control of transit companies from the various city councils and placed it in the hands of the Minnesota Railroad and Warehouse Commission; the passage of a compulsory old-age pension law; reclassification of tax laws to remove the heavy tax burden from farm lands; exclusion of labor unions from the State's anti-trust laws; establishment of a State-owned printing plant, and the passage of legislation to prohibit use of injunctions in labor disputes until adequate and immediate hearing has been granted.

Conservatives joined the Governor in the passage of a program of public construction to alleviate unemployment. "By reason of a governmental policy carried on under the claim of economy," he said, referring to the previous administration, "our State institutions are greatly in need of appropriations for repairs and enlargement. . . . Let us meet the situation frankly and courageously and provide for these improvements, not only because they are an immediate necessity, but also because they will assist the people of Minnesota in our unemployment situation." No sooner had he spoken these words than he proceeded to ask passage of a law "providing that wages paid on public work carried on directly by the State, or by contract with the State, must be equal to the highest prevailing scale of wages paid for the particular kind of work performed."

Failing to obtain passage of such a law, the Governor immediately set a minimum-wage scale on all highway-construction work and ordered the State Commission on Administration and Finance to incorporate minimum-wage scales in the specifications for all State construction jobs. The wage scales in each case were to be set in accordance with the prevailing union scales for skilled and unskilled labor in the various localities where the construction work was to be done.

Less than an hour after he spoke on this subject, hundreds of unemployed men ("reds" the papers called them) marched upon the Capitol, swarmed about the corridors. Lean, tired, hungry men, with babies at home crying for food. Would the new Governor be as "liberal" as he pretended to be, or would he call upon the police to throw them out? Within a few moments after they arrived he sent an emissary out to talk to them. The Governor would be glad to see them all in his office, but there wasn't room. Would they please appoint a committee which the Governor would be glad to see? He would listen to their demands, and do everything he could for them.

Shortly after Governor Olson had established minimum-wage scales on highway-construction work, several contractors attempted to blow a little righteous indignation into the Republican newspapers of the State. They took editors to construction camps, pointed out to them the number of tractors in use, and said in effect: "There—see what Olson's minimum-wage law is doing. It's cheating workmen out of jobs. We've been forced into this motorization because of his vicious law." Their efforts failed when the Republican State Highway Commission came to the Governor's aid, and after a brief survey made public figures to show that the motorization had been going on gradually and that even under the minimum-wage law the increase in the use of motorized equipment had been no greater than formerly.

Who is this Floyd B. Olson, Governor of Minnesota? Why his rapid rise to his present powerful position in a rock-ribbed Republican State? Why was he able to accomplish what the Farmer-Labor Party had been attempting unsuccessfully to accomplish during the past twelve years?

To begin with, he is an erstwhile bootblack and freight-handler and former county attorney of Hennepin County. He is energetic and forceful, and speaks—especially when talking with newspapermen—the language of "The Front Page." The real Floyd B. Olson can probably best be described by the following: when alone in his office and at home, he smokes a corncob pipe; he never smokes it in public; he is afraid that people might consider it a pose. A poor boy who wanted an education, he shined shoes and peddled newspapers to pay for it. He wanted to become a lawyer, so a job as a freight-handler provided the money. His first position as an attorney was a clerkship in a law firm. He waited for his opportunity. It came in 1915 when he was twenty-four years old. Just as an important case was to be tried, the trial attorney of his firm became ill. Young Olson was given the job—and won the case. In 1919, when the Hennepin County attorney was removed, Mr. Olson was appointed acting county attorney, was elected to the office when the term expired, and was reelected twice. In 1924 he was nominated by the Farmer-Labor Party as its candidate for governor, and lost by only 40,000 votes.

It was not until 1929 that Mr. Olson gained any important recognition. As county attorney for Hennepin County, he opened a grand-jury investigation of graft in the Minneapolis City Council. Four aldermen went to prison; a half-dozen business men were convicted of giving bribes.

In 1930, when the Farmer-Labor Party again asked him to run for governor on that ticket, he refused unless the party allowed him to write the platform and would agree to accept it without change. He further requested that, if elected, he was to be under no obligations to anyone in making his appointments. The party agreed and its candidate was triumphantly elected.

Whether or not Governor Olson has held to his resolve to be free in making his appointments is a moot question. He has removed virtually every appointive official holding over from the Christianson administration. And yet in all these appointments only one smacks of political pressure. One of the few really capable public officials among the Christianson appointees was H. W. Austin, State Commissioner of Purchases. There were rumors that the Governor intended to remove him. The Governor denied it, but shortly after his denial was published, he had replaced Mr. Austin.

Because he suffered throughout the summer from a severe illness which might have made another campaign impossible, the Governor's future political course was uncertain, and vague reports were circulated. He has put an end to these by announcing recently that he is restored physically and ready to accept the candidacy of the Farmer-Labor Party in 1932.

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Hegel—a Hundred Years After

By OSCAR JASZI

ON November 14 the centenary of the death of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel will be remembered in the halls of many universities and many scientific societies, not only in Germany, but in every place where the great performances of philosophic thought are revered. There can be no doubt that few philosophers have influenced their own and later generations to the same extent as did this former theologian who, after many weary years as private tutor, high-school principal, and—after his growing fame—professor at Heidelberg, became the leading spirit of the University of Berlin. He created in Germany a school of thought which was influential in practically all fields of spiritual research, and the *Hegelianer* enjoyed many favors of the Prussian government. In this way the system of Hegel became a sort of state religion which cemented the foundations of the new Prussia and later the Bismarckian empire. Long after Hegel's death his thought was a motive force in the elaboration of this imperial sham constitutionalism which, based on a powerful military caste and a highly efficient bureaucracy, transmuted the former "people of poets and philosophers" into a nation of warriors and *Realpolitiker*. At the same time many of the outstanding thinkers of England, France, and Italy came under the sway of Hegel's metaphysics; it is sufficient to recall such names as Proudhon, Renan, and Taine in France, Green and Bosanquet in England, and Croce in Italy to show that his influence was not only political, but that world-minded thinkers found an enormous impetus in his general philosophy. Yet in the last decades of the nineteenth century his influence waned conspicuously. The growing force of the natural sciences and democratic public opinion began to regard his philosophy as antiquated and impatiently repudiated his "medieval hair-splitting." Hegelianism became the weapon of a few isolated aristocratic thinkers, or the slogan of imperialistic diplomats and generals. After the World War, however, the forgotten philosophy of Hegel again became a mass force. We witness a curious rebirth of the Prussian state philosopher, of the "high priest of the Absolute," of the reconciler of Christianity with the imperialistic *Machtstaat*, in two antagonistic camps and in two antithetical ways. In a conscious and systematic way he has become the chief philosophic authority of fascism; in a more hidden, half-conscious fashion, through his midwife role in the birth of the Marxian system, his great influence in the present ideology of the Soviet state cannot be disguised.

This rebirth of the thought of Hegel in the leading revolutionary and counter-revolutionary countries cannot be explained by the philosopher's personality. Indeed, no other first-class thinker has been so dull and personally unattractive as this prophet of the World-Spirit. There was nothing dynamic or thrilling about him. The moral heroism of Kant, the national ardor of Fichte, the brilliant romantic imagination of Schelling were alien to him. He had no sense of the greatness of nature. No passionate love ever colored his life. (A love letter to his fiancee is a heavy dissertation on the distinction between "satisfaction and happiness.") No great and true friendship gave impetus to his soul. His style, sometimes called the "grand style," distressed his contemporaries. It is not only monotonous, but such a conglomeration of Aristotelian, scholastic, and Kantian terminology, which he used in an entirely arbitrary manner, that perhaps no two men have ever understood him in the same way. He himself is reputed to have said: "Only one of my students has understood me, and even he failed." No wonder that such classic writers of clear and forceful expression as Schopenhauer and Dühring attacked him with the lashes of irony.

The remarkable influence of Hegel's system on different generations and temperaments, in short, can be explained only by an analysis of the philosophy itself. Hegel was not an occasional philosopher; in spite of his conservative leanings, he was not a subservient advocate of powerful interests. His social and political philosophy can be understood only as the coronation of his whole system. We must keep in mind three determining forces of his metaphysical edifice. One was his larger intellectual bias. He was a logical imperialist with a deep mystico-religious background. He had an insatiable desire to express his enormous knowledge of facts in systematic logical formulae. He became almost a philosophic pope, who in his chair at the University of Berlin regarded his philosophy as the final and ultimate expression of the World-Spirit. The second was the atmosphere of those colossal historical events through which he lived. He saw the grandiose beginnings of the French Revolution, which, in spite of his conservatism, he admired in the most enthusiastic way; he was shaken by the bloody events of the Terror; he regarded Napoleon's entry into Jena with awe (in a letter he wrote that he had seen "the World-Spirit on horseback"); he lived through the wars of liberation, suffered the humiliation of Germany, breathed the atmosphere of the Holy Alliance, and was irritated by the second French revolution and the Reform Bill in England.

The third determining force in his thought was his growing dissatisfaction with German conditions and his longing for a united Germany which could rival the great nations of the West. His dissatisfaction with contemporary conditions was so strong that in his youth even his solid religious foundation was shaken. His attitude toward disunited Germany was exactly the same as that of Machiavelli toward disunited Italy some three hundred years earlier. No wonder he became an ardent admirer of the Florentine. His philosophy, moreover, surpassed Machiavelli's doctrine in its terrifying non-morality. What was for the author of the "Principe" a lamentable necessity under the entirely corrupt conditions of the period became in Hegel's state worship almost a corollary of the moral law. What happened here is one of the darkest chapters in the history of human thought. Machiavelli was, so to say, canonized, and the idea of the *Staatsraison* created a special morality for practical politics which had nothing to do with the commands of individual morality—indeed, was entitled to crush them. All the bloody sacrifices, the cruel exploitations, the broken treaties for the maintenance or enlargement of the state were

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now sanctified by the purposive evolution of the World-Spirit. The state had no other duty than to maintain and fortify itself, and everything that opposed its glorious march must be smashed ruthlessly.

This amazing dogma is a logical and inevitable consequence of the Hegelian system, for which the whole evolution of nature and of the spiritual world is a continuous self-realization of the World-Spirit, which, through the trinity of its dialectic process, through the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis of its self-created categories, proceeds victoriously toward a more and more complete self-consciousness. In this system of logical idealism thinking and being become identical; and Hegel, the only true prophet of this process, in whose mind the World-Spirit, so to say, recognized itself, did not shrink from the final conclusion: "What is rational is real, what is real is rational." In this evolution toward a complete self-realization of the Spirit, the state is the ultimate term because it signifies the highest degree of moral reality, which is freedom. Of course not the freedom of social reformers, humanitarians, politicians, or petty Philistines, but the freedom of chosen individuals who feel themselves united with the World-Spirit. This almighty principle of the Hegelian philosophy is a shrewd Demiurge. Not only does it inspire the great men of the period, the *weltgeschichtlichen Persönlichkeiten,* with the half-conscious vision of its intentions, but through the "trick of reason" *(List der Idee)* it drives all the personages on the historical scene toward its final purposes by deceiving them through the desire for personal gratification. Thus world history becomes an immense theater of marionettes, in which kings, statesmen, and generals, though often struggling for personal advantage, help the World-Spirit in its bloody but divine progress toward a greater freedom for itself. This is why war is the chief moral agent in the edifice of Hegelian thought. Abhorred and detested by vegetative minds, war is, in the great creative process, an inevitable necessity, the supreme instrument of the *Weltgericht,* because the real meaning of world history is the repression or final extirpation of those states which have lost their significance in the march of the World-Spirit. For in any great historical period there can be but one nation which is the great ruler—all the others must be subservient to the nation which carries progress onward; that is, makes the next step in the evolution of moral freedom.

It is very difficult in our time to realize the great hypnotizing force of this doctrine, which was unsuccessfully challenged by the indignant outcry of the sober Schopenhauer: "Spirit? Who is this fellow? And how do you know him? Is he not rather an arbitrary and comfortable hypostasis which you do not even define, much less deduce or prove?"

But it is easy to see that this whole system is animated by all the tendencies of the restoration period which followed the overthrow of Napoleon. It is a challenge to the whole philosophy of natural law which culminated in the system of Rousseau and was further developed by Kant. The self-reliance of individual morality, of the autonomy of human personality, must be crushed in order to introduce the power of the state. While Rousseau and Kant stood for the independence of the individual, for Hegel the individual is only an insignificant cell in a vast organism. The categoric imperative is replaced by the state imperative; the social contract by the manifestation of the Absolute. Individual perfection is of no importance. The chief aim of the evolution is the realization of the Spirit. The state is no longer an instrument in the hands of enlightened individuals; the individuals are instruments in the hands of the state. The idea of eternal peace is ridiculed; war as a world tribunal is worshiped. Pacifism is repudiated for imperialism. A successive emancipation of the human race is a shallow dream compared with the *divina comedia* of the World-Spirit. To seek and work for the "best state" is a fad; only the arrival of the "inevitable state" is of importance.

Even this hopelessly inadequate survey will explain, I hope, the success of the Hegelian philosophy at the present time. That it has become the state philosophy of fascism scarcely needs pointing out. All the claims of the Mussolinian imperialism seem to find support in this system. The rebellious individual, incapable of grasping the lofty ideas of the Duce, must be annihilated. Nor must we forget that Hegel hated the liberal parliamentarian state, and dreamed of a renewed medievalism in the form of strictly regulated corporations. The will of the people must be carried on, but the people are blind; therefore their organic leaders must find out their real will. Class divisions have a divine origin which cannot be eliminated, but must be coordinated. Many decrees of Gentile, the Fascist educational reformer, sound like dissertations on Hegelian philosophy.

Not so obvious is the influence of Hegel on the Marxian system and on its final expression in the Soviet state. But Marx himself said that he had realized the fundamental thought of the Hegelian system, "putting it on its feet rather than on its head," as Hegel had left it. By this the prophet of materialism meant that the mysterious World-Spirit of Hegel found in his hands a more solid and robust explanation in the dialectic movement of society itself, which, according to the laws of economic determinism, must inevitably lead to communism. The chief Demiurge was no longer the pale moral freedom of the Spirit but the self-realization of the whole of mankind in terms of material and spiritual prosperity. But this new World-Spirit was as tyrannical as the old one of Hegel. And when Lenin said that, if necessary, two-thirds of mankind should be exterminated in order that the glorious realm of an emancipated world might be realized, he spoke in the spirit of the Hegelian philosophy. Similarly, when the founders of historical materialism asserted that communism would be mankind's "leap from the world of necessity to the world of freedom," they surely felt themselves as the executors of the will of the philosopher of the Absolute. Furthermore, the whole ideology of the Communists, ridiculing individual morality and the right to freedom of thought and self-expression, can be easily supported by many quotations from Hegel.

It would be a thrilling task to follow the example of Croce, who has demonstrated wonderfully what is living and what is dead in the philosophy of Hegel, and to show what is dead and what still living in his social and political conceptions, but unfortunately it would be too lengthy an undertaking here. The only suggestion I would make is this: that the future of our whole civilization depends on whether or not mankind will be able to reconcile Hegel's and Marx's tremendously strong historical vision of what is and was with the deep moral intuition of Rousseau and Kant of the things which ought to be.

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In the Driftway

NOT long ago the Drifter, caught in New York, turned into Madison Square Garden to have a look at the World Series Rodeo. It is an annual affair and worth the price of admission merely to hear the names of the places the boys with the wide hats hail from. Amarillo and Okmogee, Tucson and Hurricane, Las Vegas and Three Rivers, Cripple Creek and Mustang Island. Geography is uprooted; the Garden becomes a dry plain where the wind blows incessantly, back and forth, like a cow's tail switching flies. As for the cowboys, their names are as fresh as the shade in a coulee in July. And they sit slouchy and long-legged on the white fences of the stock pens in the Garden as if they were sitting on any old corral fence west of the Platte. The illusion is complete when the first cowboy walks away from his first encounter with a bucking horse. A cowboy's walk is not so much a walk as an expression of contempt for walking. The legs cannot forget the contours of a horse's back.

* * * * *

THERE was some excellent riding, lassoing, and hanging on at the Garden the night the Drifter went there. The horses and the steers and the calves had full play. The cowboys worked. And if any tenderfoot thinks it is not hard work to rope, throw, and truss up a calf so that he can't get away from the hot branding iron (this is omitted from the Garden show)—and do it all in as little as twelve seconds—he should try it some time. As for bulldogging a steer with horns that look three feet long but are probably only two and a half, the Drifter would rather watch it than try it. He does wish, however, that he had gone in for broncho-busting. A bucking horse is a beautiful study in violent motion. The rider is a foil to heighten the effect and provide a climax when he flies off at a tangent from the arched back of his mount. The Drifter has no desire to be a foil but broncho-riding is only the first and least part of a much larger undertaking. Breaking a spirited colt to the saddle without injuring his spirit must be as delicate and fascinating a job as controlling a spirited child. The Drifter suspects it is much more satisfying. A child grows up and finds you out. A horse, by some magical dispensation, is both intelligent and loyal. He never doubts his master, never disgraces him, never leaves him willingly, worships him to the last ride whether he be cattle thief, movie actor, or only a drifter. The Drifter still intends to break in a good horse. Then if he survives the experience, he will retire—in the course of one of his retirements—with his charger to a log cabin and a snug barn on some wooded slope where trails are up and down and long and quiet, where the smell of pine trees rather than motor exhausts tempers the mind of man and horse.

* * * * *

THE Drifter has wandered far from the Garden. It is even farther to the last rodeo he saw outside New York. It was part of a Fourth of July celebration on an Indian reservation in Montana. Indian reservations have a quality all their own of desolation, as if life had really stopped even though allotments are farmed and the general store prospers. The town of Arlee that day was full of the tepees of Indians who had come long miles to see the celebration. Old squaws smoked their pipes inside. Young squaws smoked cigarettes outside. There was some exciting riding in the corral. The show was lively enough. Cowboys, both Indian and white, were hurtling through the air at frequent intervals, and one horse in his blind rage at being mounted killed himself on a jutting fence rail. But the Drifter could not help being haunted by the realization that the cowboy and his pony, like the Indian, have had their day. Roping calves, bulldogging cattle, breaking horses used to be part of an honest (or dishonest) day's work. Now their only economic value lies in the arena. The clothes that once were worn because they were practical have become only a costume. The "rodeer" which was work has become a rodeo which is merely a spectacle. The ranch, like the reservation, harbors a dying race.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

The Farmers and the Cow War

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your "little private revolution" in *The Nation* for October 7 touches only the fringe of the garment of cow-testing. Are the farmers in Iowa and Minnesota and Wisconsin and other States against honest testing of their herds? Do they want sick cattle and profitless live stock? You ask them. It was the farmers who initiated the tuberculin testing and asked for State help and reasonable legislation. A tuberculous cow is a dead loss as a producer, and a tuberculous calf or steer is the poorest profit-maker the farmer can have. So he wants to rid his herd of this disease.

What, then, is the matter? Why do the farmers of Iowa pick up their pitchforks to keep the testers on the other side of the fence? First of all, the farmers are convinced that the serum, as it is now made, is as useless for tuberculin testing as thin rainwater. But the real rub is under the other shoulder. The State had been paying the farmer a nominal price for all condemned cattle and selling them to the packers in Omaha, St. Paul, Chicago, and Kansas City to be made into soap. All went well for a time, and then the packers began to discover cows and steers that were not infected. A federal inspector was appointed to decide which animal was and which was not infected after it had been killed and opened up. If it was found to be bad it passed to the soap vat; if sound it passed to the A-1 meat department and could be served in the Waldorf-Astoria as porterhouse steak. It was obviously cheaper to buy tested and condemned beef at one cent a pound—the price paid to the State—than to buy on the regular market at seven to ten cents a pound.

Let me quote a recent letter from my two sisters who still remain on the farm where our whole family was born and brought up—right over in Minnesota, seventy miles west of Minneapolis:

> Well, a few weeks ago here comes a man and says testing is going on and a special test is to be made. So the next day we had to get all the stock into the barn—those that had been in the pasture all summer, also. But as we had lost only one in a former test we did not think much of it. When he came back to see if there were any reactors he found six three-year-old heifers nearly ready to come fresh, two three-year-old cows that were milking, and one four-

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year-old cow that was milking. We got mad and told him they were no more sick with T. B. than he was. But he said he was a federal man and knew his business. So we had to send nine of our healthy cows to be slaughtered. We sent Fred down to see when they were butchered, and do you know they were passed as perfect, only four that they had to try to find a pimple in the skin or a spot in the liver as big as a pin head, but not one had T. B. at all. Martin Olsons lost three, so they came over and we said we will have to quit raising any more good milk cows for Armour and Swift to buy at one cent a pound. . . .

The cows referred to in the letter were well-bred Holsteins and worth more than three times what the State paid the owners for them. In this particular case, as in most other cases, this raid on the farmer has put him on the rocks and taken his very livelihood from him.

With the tuberculin testing, the grasshoppers, and the Farm Board the farmers are hard put. The slaughtering of every third cow came long before the Farm Board thought of plowing down every third row of cotton.

New York, October 1 J. O. Bentall

Fewer and Better "Films"

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I cannot understand why *The Nation* devotes so much space to reviewing films. It seems to me that *The Nation* exercises good judgment when it covers as many *arts* as possible. Literature, drama, music, painting—these are arts. Present-day motion pictures are not. To determine whether a pursuit can be rightfully termed an art, one must judge its traditions and the attainments and intellectual capacities of those engaged in it; also, whether it has recognized aesthetic qualities, whether it is a civilizing influence, and whether it helps one to live more intelligently.

If I am right, then motion pictures cannot be called an art. Films represent chiefly a form of entertainment and are more accurately likened to bridge and backgammon. I assume that *Nation* readers prefer to choose from this entertainment only the best; therefore your critic should report only on such films as he thinks are worth while. His reviews will then be a truly critical and selective guide. In reporting on the arts, however, both the good and the bad should be reviewed, for we should be familiar not only with the notable accomplishments in an art but also with the inferior.

Some may think that the standard "worth while" when applied to films is debatable. I don't. In *The Nation* for September 30 your own Henry Hazlitt proved that the better films are adapted from the stage. I am not implying that your critic should limit his reviews to such films. Good pictures come from other sources too or are written directly for the screen. I merely suggest that there need be nothing elusive about the term "worth while," and that a discerning critic, by using good judgment, noting the source of a picture, being familiar beforehand with the players in it and their former pictures, and reading the advance ballyhoo, can guide himself, just as he can *Nation* readers, to the worth-while films with little loss of time and patience. If your critic sees an inferior film, it isn't necessary to take up valuable space to disclose his error or to tell us something that has long been common knowledge—that the movie magnates are vulgarians and that the mass taste is banal.

If *The Nation's* irrevocable policy is to have "Films" appear at scheduled intervals and take up a specified amount of space, it would be preferable to see the reviews of inconsequential films supplanted by white space.

Jackson Heights, N. Y., November 2 I. K. Rolling

Finance

Has the Depression Turned the Corner?

MANY observers believe that the past fortnight should be marked with a white stone as signalizing the turning-point in a period of depression which, considering only the stupendous values involved, has had no counterpart in history. If this proves to be the case, the occasion will be almost unique in that it was identified contemporaneously rather than some months or years after the event, as usually happens. The explanation seems to be that so many weaknesses, maladjustments, and difficult situations have moved dramatically toward improvement in the past two weeks as to create a strong presumption that conditions cannot again be so bad as they have recently been.

Nearly every competent student has believed that one of the first signs of recovery would be an upward movement in drastically deflated commodity prices. This we have had in wheat, which has risen approximately 20 cents a bushel, or 43 per cent, within a month. Further, it has been recognized that panicky misgivings regarding the American banking and credit structure, expressed in currency hoarding at home and enormous exports of gold to foreigners, was a condition making economic recovery impossible while it lasted. Now, when our statistics show a decrease of $24,000,000 in money circulation in a week, as against more than a billion increase in twelve months, the signal is flashed around the world that the dollar is not going off the gold base after all, and speculators abroad engage in a mad scramble for American currency which—with other influences, to be sure—sends nearly every foreign exchange rate below the dollar par.

In addition to these so-called natural movements of economic forces, produced by man in the mass without conscious leadership, individual actions by bankers and heads of government have served to reassure the doubters and to lay the groundwork of political agreement needed for a solution of some of the world's vexing problems. The Hoover-Laval conversations, the Interstate Commerce Commission's rate decision and "pooling" plan, the organization of the National Credit Corporation to aid distressed banks, the unexpected payment by the Bank of England of two-fifths of the $250,000,000 credit obtained last August from the Bank of France and the New York Federal Reserve Bank—all these events have without question had a cumulative effect, both concrete and sentimental, on the business outlook.

What kind of prosperity is this toward which the American people, hopefully but with many remaining doubts, is raising its eyes? One thing is certain. To the extent that business recovery is accomplished without the insane misuse of credit which characterized 1928 and 1929, the level of activity will be at a far lower level, possibly for years to come, than it was during our recent "new era." If gold begins to flow our way—probably through release of earmarked stocks now held by the Federal Reserve—the first use to which it is likely to be put will be the paying off of a good part of the $716,000,000 of rediscounts which member banks owe at the Reserve banks. Much of that borrowing probably represents antiseptic credit, applied to sore spots in the business organism without great hopes of profit. The paying of debts, plus the skepticism of a disillusioned public, does not augur well for an immediate resumption of the inflationist process.

S. Palmer Harman

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Books, Music, Drama

Two Sonnets from Petrarch

By JOSEPH AUSLANDER

Non fur ma' Giove e Cesare sì mossi

Never was Jupiter so set on thunder,
Nor Caesar never so resolved to shatter
But Mercy like a blast would swoop to scatter
The flame, or tear the hand and sword asunder.
Milady wept: my Lord said (O sweet blunder!)
That I should see her, hear her sorrows flatter
My soul with listening, and thrill to the matter
And very marrow of my bones with wonder.
To me Love pointed, carved into my breast
That bright and silver tear, those mysteries
Cut with a diamond at Love's behest,
Where, with his subtle and incessant keys,
He still returns, as to a treasure chest,
My own true tears, my dark sighs to release.

Nè per sereno ciel ir vaghe stelle

Not summer stars in a hushed violet sky
Throbbing, nor white sails on a violet sea,
Nor glittering knights riding through greenery,
Nor long-eyed stags that dizzily flash by,
Nor tidings that could make a dead man cry,
Nor love appareled in royal melody,
Nor, by soft fountains beside grass and tree,
Girls tall as angels singing where they lie—
Of these may none ever unlock my heart
Well fastened with the dust of her slim hands
Beneath the stone that spilled my light at length.
O life, what bliss it were to wrench apart!
My will burns to her, though it understands
How she despoiled and stripped it of its strength.

American Authors

Classic Americans. By Henry Seidel Canby. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

WITH the exception of the very dull, not particularly well-written, and not altogether essential chapter on the colonial background, this is a valuable and important book. Dr. Canby is at his best when he is treating a single writer, for then all the evidence may be collected and subjected to conscientious analysis. Often this analysis yields fresh and significant results. His whole treatment of Irving, for example, is incisive, but he is especially acute in his discussion of Irving as a Federalist. Similarly, the discussion of Cooper as a Quaker, that of Poe as a journalist, and that of Emerson as a preacher are pointed and certain to be influential. Of Thoreau and Whitman he has nothing quite so original to say, but his observations are thoughtful and just. The only disappointing chapter in the book, aside from the introduction, is that on Hawthorne and Melville, which is only moderately penetrating in its estimate of Hawthorne, is admittedly inadequate in its comment on Melville, and is a good deal less resourceful than it might be in its comparison of the two writers.

Dr. Canby tells us that he first planned a complete history of American literature and subsequently restricted himself, very wisely, to this less ambitious project. He did not, however, forget his intention of studying American literature "in the light of its social and intellectual backgrounds," and not the least valuable portion of each essay is that which defines the essential Americanism of the author under discussion. Such an approach suggests, of course, comparison of "Classic Americans" with Parrington's more elaborate treatise, and in that comparison Canby does not fare so badly as one might suppose. He is obviously less familiar than Parrington with social history, and he has not the space and presumably not the ability to document thoroughly his generalizations about the American scene. But his powers of literary analysis are so much greater than Parrington's, and he is so much more ingenious and so much more inclusive in his treatment of any particular author, that he discovers influences and tendencies that the intellectual historian, with his not very subtle critical apparatus, overlooked. And he shows, more consistently and more resourcefully than Parrington, the operation of social and intellectual influences in the processes of literary creation.

Canby, too, has his social philosophy. It is less explicit than Parrington's forthright Jeffersonian liberalism, but it is there and can be pieced together. The most sweeping generalization in the book is an incontrovertible one: all of these men —like most artists, of course, as Canby admits—were opposed to the commercial spirit, and in their various ways reacted against it. With this opposition Canby strongly sympathizes. He admires, therefore, the program of Thoreau, for it is the most drastic and, from one point of view, the most practical protest against the gospel of mammonism. But he not only sees that Thorellianism is no way out for modern society; he is himself incapable of making the sacrifices that Thoreau made. And so he associates Thoreau's criticisms of money-grubbing with a less austere way of life. He writes, it may be noted, very sympathetically of Irving's federalism and of Cooper's ideal of the gentleman-ruler. He points out that each of these eight writers was, in his own way, an aristocrat, and that their respective philosophies are suitable only for intelligent minorities. Gradually, then, we see what he is driving at: the need for such a minority today, refined, cultivated, critical of commercial standards, individualistic in the best sense, loyal to the finest American traditions. It would be unfair to call him a neo-Federalist, for the Federalists were the bulwark of business enterprise: but it is with one element in the Federalist tradition that he affiliates himself.

There is no space here to point out the inadequacies of this position as a social philosophy, but it is important to indicate, however briefly, its inadequacies as a basis for criticism. Canby says that we have had no great writers since these men died; he is right, and it is to be hoped that in a second volume he will show why this is true. But in the meantime we have the question of what these authors, admittedly our greatest, can mean to us today. This is a question that Canby evades. Their day is coming, he says; they will have a place in the future; the time will soon be ripe for them. But that is all on the assumption that our industrial society is about to stabilize itself and give birth to the intelligent minority he hopes for. "We have gone through," he says, "that necessary state where the means for living without digressive effort are readily provided. . . . The plain man has acquired civilized luxuries, if not civilized tastes." So? Are the means of living readily provided for the six or perhaps ten million unemployed, or for the miners of Harlan County? This is not a quibble; it is a fundamental issue for literary criticism. If Canby's aristocratic minority can exist only at the cost of the continued suffering of millions of men—and the evidence seems to be on that side—can it come into

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being, and if it does can it endure? If not, what is the importance of these "classic Americans"? Can they be classics either in a society from which basic economic injustice has at last been eliminated or in a society in which the struggle to eliminate that injustice is the most important consideration? If so, from what qualities will their classic significance be derived? These are questions Canby does not answer, for he does not even see that they exist. The critic who does answer them will make a revolutionary contribution to both literary and social thought.

GRANVILLE HICKS

Science for the Child

ONE sultry summer day I took refuge in a library. Because the reading-room was so hot and its magazines were so commonplace, I found my way into the children's room, there to seek the shelves marked Nature and Science.

I was poorly prepared for what I found. Years of research had allowed me to neglect changes in science as written for children. I knew that books were prettier, of course, and I assumed that their language was up to date. Yet I knew little of new trends in purpose and subject, and nothing of merits in comparison with those of the books I myself once cherished.

The remedy for ignorance seemed to be reading. As I read, I began to plan a more leisurely survey which, by stressing books of this year and last, would result in judgments clearer than those gained from selected pages and attractive bindings. Not an analysis, but a rambling survey which still would trace main paths in science.

Even a ramble must start somewhere; and the universe seemed likely ground. In the days of my own juvenile reading, astronomy generally appeared in books composed of legends and poems, illustrated by mythological monsters and a few star maps. Such a book (but of 1931) is "Stars and Their Stories," by Alice M. M. Griffith (Century, $1), whose store of scientific information is correspondingly meager. At the opposite pole stands "The Stars for Sam," by W. Maxwell Reed (Harcourt, Brace, $3), a well-written book which reflects the tremendous range—and change—of modern astronomy. From galaxies to electrons, the elements of our modern universe appear in words, drawings, and rarely good plates. Editing by Dr. Charles E. St. John is ample guaranty of accuracy.

In the history of that small astronomical body, the earth, honors also are held by Maxwell Reed—and have been since "The Earth for Sam" was first printed in 1929 (Harcourt, Brace, $3.50). In unconventional language and with abundant illustrations this book traces the development of both the earth and life. Novel sketches by Karl Mosely give point to obscure geologic theories.

For younger readers "How the World Is Changing," by Edith Heal (Rockwell, $1.25), offers a fine account of earth processes, while a companion volume, "How the World Began," tells the story of animals in the geologic past. "Stories of the First Animals," by Edith Walker (Farrar and Rinehart, $1.50), treats the same field. For me it is spoiled by some awkward poems and very coarse drawings which lack the virtue of true simplicity. Yet I can think of no book of my own early youth which rivaled any one of these in presenting the science that is now my specialty.

Living things fare better, even, than fossil ones in books which stress principles rather than history or detail. The Rockwell series contains "The Garden of the Earth," by Janet McGill, a cleverly illustrated and readable account of basic functions in plant life. "Green Magic," by Julie C. Kenly (Appleton, $2.50), covers similar ground a little more fully, with woodcut illustrations which make the book a treasure. Miss Edith Patch puts many essays on plants into her growing Holiday series (Macmillan, $2 each), of which the most recent title is "Holiday Hill." Both as writer and scientist Miss Patch is our leader among nature essayists for younger children.

For older ones "The Life Story of Beasts," by Eric Fitch Daglish (Morrow, $3), offers both good mammalogy and unusual pictures. Mr. Daglish's woodcuts are unique and beautiful, and the long list of his books that Morrow has published seems to show that they have met royal welcome. Frankly, I suspect a good deal of it comes from adults, who find in these sophisticated black-and-whites virtues strictly in tune with modern life.

Both adults and youngsters will appreciate the "Standard Natural History," edited by Professor Pycraft (Frederick Warne, $6). A competent scientist and a popular writer noted for his pages in the *Illustrated London News,* Professor Pycraft has provided us with a natural history which is both good reading and a standard reference, maintaining the traditions long ago set up by another Englishman, Richard Lydekker.

Good books on birds and insects are surprisingly few in this year's lists. "Bird Memories of the Rockies," by Enos Mills (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), is a nature volume of merit, though it hardly presents the science of ornithology. Margaret Powers's "The World of Insects" (Rockwell, $1.25) is a worthy member of the Nature of the World series through which that publisher has gained his place in the sun. It follows the trend of modern biology by stressing essential functions and problems of insect life rather than dealing with individual groups or species. Miss Patch includes excellent life histories of damsel flies and aphids in "Holiday Pond," my favorite of her series.

Animals lend themselves to treatment in stories, and such stories have formed vital parts of the science education of many a growing naturalist. They continue to appear and "Northern Lights," by Mikkel Fonhus (Longmans, Green, $2), carries on the tradition of Roberts, with the polar bear as its hero. To Wilfrid Swancourt Bronson, however, must go credit for inventing a new type of nature story which both lives up to the demands of the modern child and tells more facts than many textbooks. "Fingerfins," the story of a Sargasso fish, and "Paddlewings," that of a Galapagos penguin (Macmillan, $2 each), outrank any nature stories of my own youth in both style and store of basic information. Compared with them, N. Karazin's "Cranes Flying South" (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50) is a disappointment indeed—though there doubtless are some who will prefer its humanized birds to Mr. Bronson's "Paddlewings."

Like the insects, man is not fortunate in publishers' offerings for 1931. In fact, the best survey of archaeology remains "Everyday Life in the Old Stone Age" by Marjorie and C. Quennell, first published by Putnam in 1922. Though it displays that restraint which characterizes British books in popular science, it is thoroughly readable and admirably illustrated. Its nearest rival is Grace Kiner's "How the World Grew Up," of the Rockwell series, which suffers from rather clumsy drawings. "Mog, the Moundbuilder," by Irving Crump (Dodd, Mead, $2), is a tale of a young moundbuilder whose days are filled with bloody battles and hairbreadth escapes. It may raise the hair on juvenile scalps, but it will not teach much about those remarkable aborigines of southern Ohio.

The adventure of science appears in two books by Amabel Williams-Ellis. "Men Who Found Out" (Coward-McCann, $2) tells the lives of such men as Galileo, Van Leeuwenhoek, and Lister, without an attempt to moralize; "The Voyage of the Beagle" (Lippincott, $2) is a rousing tale of travel and discovery assembled from the writings of Darwin and Admiral Fitzroy. Both are well done, and fill honorable posts in the

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varied and significant library of science that awaits the modern inquiring child.

In "The Story of Health" (Harper, $1.25) Hope Holway tells in simple—yet not too simple—words the story of healing from smoking medicine lodge to the laboratory and hospital. It is a great story which every boy and girl should know.

The old-fashioned hero wore gold braid or buckskin, waved a gun, and slaughtered hordes of the wicked enemy. A more modern one uses his hands to wield scalpel or test tube, and spends his time trying to enrich or save life, not to destroy it. At least, this is what we conclude from the list of heroes selected by Joseph Cottler and Haym Jaffe in their "Heroes of Civilization" (Little, Brown, $3), which includes such names as Huygens, Lavoisier, Einstein, Koch, and Darwin. In general, these biographies are equal to the task of proving that their subjects *are* heroes, not freaks or mollycoddles. They even succeed in the more difficult job of presenting science itself as a series of great and adventurous discoveries—which is all one can ask of any hero book. CARROLL LANE FENTON

Children's Books—1931

THE children's books which have appeared in the present year maintain for the most part a standard of excellence in which authors, illustrators, and publishers may take pride. In presenting a few of the most outstanding I can only mourn the limitations of space which prevent me from dealing with more of them.

For the children from four to seven years many picture books divide the honors of their fine illustrations with text which is the outcome not solely of a desire to amuse or even to instruct the children, but of a true understanding of their tastes and capacities. Among these there is "The Blue Teapot," by Alice Dalgliesh, with illustrations by Hildegard Woodward (Macmillan, $2), a collection of five little stories centering about the Bay of Fundy whose definiteness and incisiveness and whose logically cheerful endings are especially satisfying; there is "The Yellow Shop," written and illustrated by Rachel Field (Doubleday, Doran, $.75), a story whose ingenuity and resourcefulness will delight its readers; there is "The House That Grew Smaller," by Margery Bianco (Macmillan, $1.50), which gives to a little house human feelings and reactions admirably caught by the illustrator, Rachel Field. "Boochy's Wings," by Annie Vaughan Weaver (Stokes, $1.50), describes with irresistible drollery the experiences of a little Negro Peter Pan who tried to fly; "Mamie," well told and exceptionally well illustrated, even in a year of strikingly well-illustrated picture books, by Edna Potter (Oxford University, $1), presents a tale of absent-minded little Mamie, of Providence in 1875, with humor and penetration which are utterly charming; "A Head for Happy," written and illustrated by Helen Sewell (Macmillan, $2.50), is a decidedly original story of a home-made boy doll whose three girl owners were compelled to search the world for an appropriate head for him—a search in which many an adult who feels his own head inadequate will sympathize; "Peggy and Peter," by Lena Towsley (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50), gives a simple account of the day of two little children, and is the most appealing of the camera-study books presented this year; "The Farmer in the Dell," by Berta and Elmer Hader (Macmillan, $2.50), is a little tale of farm life at different seasons of the year in the illustrations of which the Haders have surpassed anything which even they have done—particularly fine is their picture of an early winter morning. In a selection of animal stories whose humor and charm endears them even to those who think this field a bit overcrowded, there are "Bingo Is My Name," by Anne Stoddard (Century, $1); "Snippy and Snappy," by Wanda Gag (Coward-McCann, $1.50); "The Shire Colt," by Zhenya and Jane Gay (Doubleday, Doran, $2); "Ella the Elephant," by Kurt Wiese (Coward-McCann, $1.50); "Once There Was a Crocodile," by "Margaret" (Macmillan, $1.50). The prize for the picture books, however, must be divided between two claimants. One is "The Fairy Circus," by Dorothy Lathrop (Macmillan, $3.50), whose delicate beauty cannot be described, and the other is "The Christ Child" (Doubleday, Doran, $2), in which Christ's story, told from the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke, is illustrated by Maud and Miska Petersham in a manner which is truly breath-taking. I am not exaggerating in thus describing these two admirable books.

For the little children who are interested in special subjects there is "Diggers and Builders," by Henry B. Lent (Macmillan, $2), which makes the jobs of riveters, cement mixers, and derrick men perfectly clear to passionate young inquirers who have received only cautious evasions in answer to questions. "The Iron Horse," by Adele G. Nathan and Margaret S. Ernst (Knopf), gives in a lucid and concrete manner the steps in locomotive development, and is illustrated by photographs of each machine described. "The Busy Book," by Floy L. Bartlett and Alida Conover (Doubleday, Doran, $1), is unusually rich in occupational suggestions which really work out, and the "Picture Map Geography of the United States," by Vernon Quinn (Stokes, $2.50), has map drawings unusually intelligible to youngsters who must be led by gentle means to appreciate the more utilitarian maps they will encounter in later years. "Weather Signs and Rhymes," by Maginel Wright Barney (Knopf), will be a boon to conversational elevator boys as well as to children to whom the weather is of perpetual interest, and "The Junior Poetry Cure," by Robert Haven Schauffler (Dodd, Mead, $3.50), is an anthology which nobly lives up to the significance of its title.

For children from six to twelve internationalism is presented by means of stories whose scenes and characters faithfully present bits of foreign countries. "At the Inn of the Guardian Angel," adapted by Amena Pendleton from the French of Mme de Ségur (Houghton Mifflin, $2), shows us peasant France in the middle or late 1880's and an irascible comic guardian angel in the person of the Russian General Dourakine, who makes everything turn out in the blissfully perfect fashion of the times. The General makes us think of "Taras Bulba," Cossack hero of Gogol's famous classic, which has been translated and revised by Isabel Hapgood (Knopf), and which will be appreciated only by the oldest in this particular age-group. They will enjoy its blood and thunder, despite the cruelty and ruthlessness with which its pages are saturated. "Vanya of the Streets," by Ruth Epperson Kennell (Harper's), is a pathetic but not too depressing tale of the *besprizornie,* or neglected children of Russia, left to shift for themselves in the Moscow streets after the Great War. "Boy of the South Seas," by Eunice Tietjens (Coward-McCann), induces that warm identification of our own interests with those of the principal character which this author invariably succeeds in accomplishing. "Nicolina," by Esther Brann (Macmillan, $2), happens to be the first girl swineherd we have ever met. Most of the others have been fairy-tale princes in disguise. We are glad that Nicolina of modern peasant Italy achieves the truly fairy-tale climax of a visit to Florence, under the noble auspices of none other than a boy vender of tourists' post cards. In "The Truce of the Wolf," by Mary Gould Davis (Harcourt, Brace, $2), old Italy is glowingly reconstructed for us by a master-hand at story-telling, namely, the supervisor of story-telling in the New York Public Library. The stories are instinct with charm, sense of drama, and discrimination. "Knock at the Door," by Elizabeth Coatsworth (Macmillan, $2), was perhaps inspired by Strephon of "Iolanthe" fame—he who

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was half fairy and half mortal. Out of his Gilbertian dilemma Elizabeth Coatsworth has created one of her exquisite fantasies, this time with an old English feeling, with pictures by F. D. Bedford which are in perfect accord with the wistful charm of the story. There is a gift edition of "The Cuckoo Clock," by Mrs. Molesworth (Macmillan, $1.75), with colored illustrations by C. E. Brock, an old favorite which shows us a genuine and not a fanciful bit of vanished England. "The Story of Siegfried," by James Baldwin (Scribner, $2), gives us the German hero also in gala dress, the illustrations being by Peter Hurd. "Kari," by Gabriel Scott (Doubleday, Doran, $2), is instinct with the fragrant and gloriously healthy influence of the apple tree which is entwined with this artistically simple story of Kari Supper from Lindeland, Norway, who was more than "just a plain home girl." "Waterless Mountain," by Laura Adams Armer (Longmans, $3), won the prize in a juvenile contest and is a most distinguished and inspiring story of Little Singer, the Indian boy, who was finally enabled to sing his songs as he had always so burningly felt them. Finally, to knit this entire "international" group together, there is "This World We Live In," by Gertrude Hartman (Macmillan, $5), which selects the high lights of world development and gives accounts of them in a manner so interesting that it will inevitably lead to further eager research on the part of the young readers.

For boys and girls of high-school age there is first and foremost "Calico Bush," by Rachel Field (Macmillan, $2.50). Undoubtedly the book of the season of all those which have come to our attention, this story of the bound-out girl who takes service with a Maine family is deeply imbued with the charm of the period and the atmosphere it so vividly conjures up. In the classic beauty of its close-knit structure, in its realization of the aspects of early American life, it is deserving of a high position indeed in American fiction. "Try All Ports," by Elinor Whitney (Longmans, $2), a fine story of early clipper-ship days in Boston, succeeds in presenting a tale of authenticity and charm, in which the salty lure of the sea plays an unostentatious but effective role. There is nothing unostentatious about the role of the sea in "Java Ho!" by Johan Wigmore Fabricius (Coward-McCann, $2.50). Based on the log-book of Willem Bontekoe, a Dutch skipper, it tells a truly thrilling tale of a Dutch boy whose passionate love of the sea led him and his three companions into adventures electric with excitement and fun. Translated from the German, it is in its style and in certain expressions, curiously enough, reminiscent of "Hans Brinker" of beloved memory. "Away to Sea," by Stephen W. Meader (Harcourt, Brace), is the story of another sea-smitten lad who in 1821 ran away from his father's farm and signed up as cabin boy on the White Angel. It proves to be a slave ship, and the descriptions of its horrors call to mind the opening poem of Benét's "John Brown's Body." It is finely sustained narrative of great interest. "The Mystery Chest," by Rear Admiral Evans (Farrar and Rinehart, $2), is a pirate-treasure story true to type, with all the conventions of shanghaied cabin boy, villainous captain, and elusive treasure faithfully maintained.

"Young Trajan," by Elizabeth Cleveland Miller (Doubleday, Doran, $2), is the love story of Frosina and Trajan, young Rumanians of today who are suffering under the unjust landlord system which prevails in parts of Rumania. Shot through with the color and picturesqueness of Rumanian traditions, this story is a glamorous combination of the old and the new Rumania. Throughout "Durandal," by Harold Lamb (Doubleday, Doran), the inspiring clank of crusaders' armor and the flash of Roland's famous sword accompany a vivid and well-written narrative.

"Big-Enough," by Will James (Scribner, $2.50), combines the lives of a boy and a horse as inseparably and convincingly as it presents to us the American West and an absorbing story. We had thought it impossible that Will James could have a rival in illustrated stories about horses, but John Thorburn, the author of "Hildebrand" (Scribner, $5), though his treatment differs widely, runs him a close second. The illustrations by "Wag" are excellent. Two additional "gift books" must bring our sadly limited recommendations to a close—"To Have and to Hold," by Mary Johnston (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), with tempting colored illustrations by Frank Schoonover, and "The Oregon Trail," by Francis Parkman (Farrar and Rinehart, $3), whose perennial beauty is further enhanced by a fine introduction by Mark Van Doren. The illustrations are by James Daugherty, whose powerful conceptions are appropriate to the vigor of the subject matter offered by this great record of one of the most enthralling of American periods.

SOPHIE L. GOLDSMITH

Books in Brief

A History of Sweden. By A. A. Stomberg. The Macmillan Company. $8.50.

Sweden's history is as interesting as that of any other European people and on the whole less bloody and tragic. It had its periods of "glory"—the Viking expansion, the establishment of the first Russian dynasty, a position among the "great Powers" maintained until Peter the Great permitted Charles XII to bury the greatest part of its man power on the Russian steppes. Unlike Spain's or Portugal's, Sweden's forced retirement from the ruinous gaming table of European politics was not accompanied by economic and social disintegration. As in the other Scandinavian countries and in Switzerland and Holland, "powerlessness" has proved a blessing, and has enabled it to develop a healthy and admirable national life. Professor Stomberg's account is readable and orderly, but he is too much the conventional historian and the Swedish patriot (though he happens to be an American professor and, presumably, an American citizen) to produce a first-rate book. Its chief recommendation is not its own good qualities but the fact that it is the only work in its field available in English.

The Universe, from Crystal Spheres to Relativity. By Frank Allen. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

Another claimant for the honors of explaining relativity to the intelligent layman. Delivered originally as a lecture, Frank Allen's little book can do no more than skirt the fringes of this vast and complex subject. A brief but informative historical survey prepares the reader for discussions of the abstruse problems of motion, energy, and mass, space, time, light, and the ether. Emphasis is laid on the indebtedness of modern physical theory to Newton, whose concept of gravitation, far from being discarded, is still a very definite element in the speculations of Einstein. There is a very good exposition of the famous "Lorentz transformations" and of the torsion-balance experiments of Baron Eötvös with reference to "gravitational" and "inertial" mass. All of which should serve to lead interested beginners to further and more thorough study of a subject which has already inspired a little good philosophy—and much bad metaphysics.

The Song of God. A Translation of the Bhagavad-Gita. By Dhan Gopal Mukerji. E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.50.

In the course of the Mahabharata there is an interlude in which the hero Arjuna has his charioteer, the God Krishna, drive him into the No Man's Land between his troops and his enemies so that he may see, living, the men he is about to slay.

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On the side of the enemy he sees relatives and friends, and he is overcome with sadness and loses his will to fight. Krishna heartens him to do his duty; their dialogue becomes a comprehensive exposition of Indian religion and ethics. This long dialogue that reconverts Arjuna to the ruthless warrior contains material that haters of violence up to Gandhi have used as their inspiration and their text. The poem, considered as a gospel, has many sublimities; as literature, however, it has become turgid, accumulated rather than formed, and contributing to make the Mahabharata a spoiled story, the original epic having been both hidden and deformed by just such incrustations of religious and philosophic additions; precisely as Homer would be were segments of the philosophers wedged into the text. Mr. Mukerji's version, compared with three others, justifies his claim to a greater sensitiveness to the subtleties and vitalities of Hindu terminology. His interesting introduction furthers the ruin of the poem, as a poem, by insisting upon a religious symbolism obviously alien to its original nature.

Architecture

A Factory in Holland

Rotterdam, October 22

AT the Van Nelle factory here the American finds himself beaten to a frazzle at his own game. At a distance it looks a good deal like Long Island City—a gray factory with various buildings, sheds, and stacks; and yet from the very first there is a distinguishing difference. The city of Rotterdam crosses the Schie Canal on only one side of the works, which in consequence are bounded for the most part by flat Dutch pastures with grazing cows.

Now, this landscape is an integral part of the "set-up"; for in what other country could you expect a tobacco and coffee plant to be kept as spick and bright as a Dutch teakettle? From nearby the general gray breaks up into long horizontal bands of semi-lustrous iron and a vertical slab or two of concrete. The rest is all glittering, brilliant glass—not factory glass at all, as we know it, with a year's grime on it and with corrugations that keep you from looking in, but real glass such as you cannot be enjoying this minute in your New York or Chicago apartment unless you have just had it washed; this because the Van der Lieuws have adopted the American device of a railing around the top from which is suspended a traveling car, with the window-cleaners in it constantly at work—a device we at home generally put to use only about once a year. But neither do we have such clean air all around.

To secure unbroken bands of windows, the supporting concrete columns are placed behind the wall inside the room, on a system which I explained in this column last February in connection with the New School. The total effect is hardly describable to one who has not seen it: it certainly does not say "building," since the associations are not at all with brick or stone, and the necessary heavy concrete columns are all seen through the glass shimmer; nor is it quite "ship" or "airplane," though more those than the other. It is weightless, open, bright gray, mechanical, exhilarating.

Our second visit was on a dark rainy day; and if you have not experienced it before, on such a day you are surprised by the sense of well-being that derives from the discovery that it is possible to read in comfort in the deepest part of a factory without turning on a single electric light. In the entire establishment there was not one in use, even in a hallway; the great curtains of the large central office were drawn back, that was all, and in the factory proper the men at the roasting machines, who judge everything by an exact color and shade, were working at ease in daylight, as they will all winter long.

Now, I expound these simple matters in such detail mainly on account of our "modern" architects in New York, who maintain that the like is impossible, at least commercially. They will never believe, I suppose, that Mr. Van der Vlugt, the designer, has achieved fine air without artificial ventilation, mainly by laying out his buildings in the right direction with reference to sun and wind, and by managing so that insulation pockets and free air currents are both easily secured by simple manipulation of windows and shades.

For us I admit the problem would be more difficult. Our factory is built in the midst of smoke let loose all over the place; hence our own "modern" experiment is with a solid-wall, windowless type with which we shut the smoke out again, together with the sunlight; and then we say that natural air is not good enough for us anyway, nor natural light steady enough, and so we burn still more coal for the sake of electric light and "ventilation."

There was one objection I had heard in New York to the Van Nelle plans, and that concerned the loss of some three feet of space between the outermost columns and the wall, because the columns are not *in* the wall. This objection came from an architect who, I confess, is placid in the face of New York's building code, which compels him to make the wall itself from eight to twelve inches thick, where the "stolid" Dutch manage with four inches; and the two multiplications I now invite my friends to make and to compare. Yet were the whole of this objection true, instead of a third of it, I am afraid it would nevertheless all be thrown out, since, unlike us, the Dutch have no passion for crowding machinery and people. Throughout the entire factory as well as outside it, there is plenty of room; and that gets into you, too. I cared much more about that than about the combination of bright and restful colors, and the nickel-tube furniture in the offices (with American filing cabinets); it seemed almost more important than the thoroughbred style.

A good deal of the Van Nelle factory is pure swank. They use glassed-in conveyor shafts from factory to packing rooms, where metal would do; and their extra cleaning and heating cost something, in what corresponds to the advertising appropriation. It is all what we would do if we could, and dared! It is what, as you look at historical styles, you would so like to call American. They come out with it. They go the whole way.

I said a minute ago the "advertising appropriation"—no, it's the civilization fund.

DOUGLAS HASKELL

Music

Anton Bruckner

WHEN Toscanini played the Seventh Symphony of Anton Bruckner last year, the thing that struck most of us more than anything was the lack of anything striking. When Bruckner was through saying his very true things in his quite unexceptionable way, we were inclined, like the *New Yorker* after reading Mr. Coolidge, to wonder: "So what?"

Since then Bruckner has given us three more chances: one in Mr. Hoogstraaten's performance of the Fourth Symphony in the Great Hall of the City College last summer, and the others in the recent performances by Mr. Kleiber of a single movement from a student work and by the Friends of Music of the Mass in F-minor. Whatever the conclusions to be drawn from this increased acquaintance, I hope they will not be con-

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strued as ingratitude for the chances given us. Bruckner's reputation in Austria and Germany is so great that whatever the final verdict on the importance of his works may be, the neglect of them in other countries has been without any doubt exaggerated. Quite apart from their intrinsic value, we have profited by these performances, and we are indebted to the Friends and to Messrs. Van Hoogstraaten and Kleiber for satisfying (I had almost said, for allaying) our curiosity. But the conclusion to which many of us have come, if only tentatively, is that there was nothing to get very much excited about in either direction. There is certainly nothing in the Bruckner we have heard that is in any way offensive; nor have we received any very new, vital, or deeply consoling message.

In the three mature works we have heard there seems to me a fundamental fault in proportion: the protasis of his message is often startling, challenging, heroic; the apodasis seems too often insignificant. "If," one imagines Bruckner saying, for example, "Bach had lived in the nineteenth century [a stimulating supposition] he would not have been an eighteenth-century composer [true, but less interesting]." Bruckner starts with thematic material that seems to open the door to all sorts of interesting and stirring developments; his themes often have great vigor and individuality. But once having introduced them he finds nothing of any interest for them to do through the long pages that follow; his characters are strong, but their conversation is tepid and repetitious, and no plot connects them.

Perhaps something of this sort is what Mr. Bellamann, program editor for the Friends, had in mind when he wrote: "He is a romantic . . . because he looked upon this world, found it strange and filled with wonder, and sang of it in terms which he found adequate and uplifting"; and ten lines later: "This is the faith of a simple believer—the expression of the faith of one who is no explorer of heights or depths, no questioner, but a simple-hearted, whole-hearted participant. In the perfection of belief there is no residue of mystery." Yes, that is, and no.

Although the estimate I have implied is somewhat unenthusiastic—and I am frank to say that at the moment I doubt whether additional Bruckner performances will change it materially—it is only fair to remember that almost the whole French nation places a similar estimate upon Brahms, and in that case few of us would hesitate to pronounce it false and uncomprehending. Nor do I mean to imply that there are no passages of any duration in Bruckner that sustain a high level of inspiration. The Benedictus and the Agnus Dei of the F-minor Mass are, I think, thoroughly great music, able to stand comparison with many of the extraordinarily great works that the Friends habitually offer us.

But what is there about Bruckner that makes all those in any way connected with him catch his extraordinary taste for the unimportant? It is, perhaps, from the over-active American Bruckner Society, ardent propagandists, that Mr. Bellamann absorbed the notion that vague description and detailed accounts of previous American performances—hardly very significant matter—were of more interest than detailed historical and biographical material about the Mass and its composer. It would have been of interest to know, for example, whether Bruckner had ever heard, as seems from superficial inquiry likely, parts of his adored Wagner's "Meistersinger," with which the F-minor Mass at times has noticeable melodic and harmonic similarities. But one had to go to sources* other than the program to learn that the Mass was finished in 1868 and revised between 1881 and 1883; that "Die Meistersinger" was finished in 1867; that Bruckner spent many evenings in Wagner's company during May and June, 1865, and may very possibly have heard considerable portions of "Die Meistersinger" played by Wagner at

* Among others, "The Life of Anton Bruckner," by Gabriel Engel, published by the Roerich Museum Press in collaboration with the American Bruckner Society—a helpful and informative monograph, though written with a very pro-Bruckner (that is, anti-Brahms, anti-Hanslick, anti-Bülow) bias.

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that time; that Wagner had already played excerpts from the work in Vienna in January, 1863; and that in 1873, 1875, 1876, and 1882 Bruckner came into contact with Wagner and "felt just like a schoolboy while his teacher is correcting his notebook"—he went to Wagner as disciple four times, that is, between the original composition of the Mass and its final revision. Whatever these things prove, if they prove anything, they seem to me of distinctly greater value in understanding and placing the Mass than the record of Dr. Dumler's performance in Cincinnati in 1900, or Mr. Bellamann's lyric comments.

This is perhaps an appropriate place to mention the late Mrs. H. B. Lanier and the debt in which she placed all those to whom the concerts of the Friends of Music mean something. If there is one musical organization in New York more valuable than any other, I think it is the Friends of Music; it is greatly to be hoped that the continuance and development of the Friends will not be endangered by the loss of their strongest and most enthusiastic supporter. ARTHUR MENDEL

Drama

Our Electra

EXCEPT for a dinner intermission Eugene O'Neill's new trilogy, "Mourning Becomes Electra" (Guild Theater), runs from five o'clock in the afternoon until about eleven-fifteen in the evening. Seldom if ever has any play received a reception so unreservedly enthusiastic as this one was accorded by the New York newspapers and, to begin with, I can only say that I share the enthusiasm to the full. Here, in the first place, are those virtues—intelligence, insight, and rapid, absorbing action—which one expects in the best contemporary dramatic writing. But here also are a largeness of conception and a more than local or temporary significance which put to rest those doubts which usually arise when one is tempted to attribute a lasting greatness to any play of our generation. O'Neill, though thoroughly "modern," is not dealing with the accidents of contemporary life. He has managed to give his—I am almost tempted to say "our"—version of a tale which implies something concerning the most permanent aspects of human nature, and it is hard to imagine how the play could lose its interest merely because of those superficial changes which take place from generation to generation. For this reason it may turn out to be the only permanent contribution yet made by the twentieth century to dramatic literature.

As the title suggests, O'Neill's fable follows, almost incident for incident, the main outlines of the Greek story. Though he has set the action in New England just after the Civil War, his Clytemnestra murders Agamemnon and his Electra persuades Orestes to bring about the death of their common mother. Nor do such changes as are necessarily made in the motivation of the characters so much modify the effect of the story as merely restore that effect by translating the story into terms which we can fully comprehend. It is true that Electra loves her father and that Orestes loves his mother in a fashion which the Greeks either did not understand or, at least, did not specify. It is true also that the play implies that the psychological quirks responsible for the tragedy are the result of a conflict between puritanism and healthy love. But this is merely the way in which we understand such situations, and the fact remains that these things are *merely* implied, that the implications exist for the sake of the play, not the play for the sake of the implications. It is, moreover, this fact more than any other which indicates something very important in the nature of O'Neill's achievement.

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Hitherto most of our best plays have been—of necessity perhaps—concerned primarily with the exposition and defense of their intellectual or moral or psychological backgrounds. They have been written to demonstrate that it was legitimate to understand or judge men in the new ways characteristic of our time. But O'Neill has succeeded in writing a great play in which a reversal of this emphasis has taken place at last. Because its thesis is taken for granted, it has no thesis. It is no more an exposition or defense of a modern psychological conception than Aeschylus is an exposition or defense of the tenets of the Greek religion, even though it does accept the one as Aeschylus accepts the other. It is on the other hand—and like all supremely great pieces of literature—primarily about the passions and primarily addressed to our interest in them. Once more we have a great play which does not "mean" anything in the sense that the plays of Ibsen or Shaw or Galsworthy usually mean something, but one which does, on the contrary, mean the same thing that "Oedipus" and "Hamlet" and "Macbeth" mean—namely, that human beings are great and terrible creatures *when they are in the grip of great passions, and that the spectacle* of them is not only absorbing but also and at once horrible and cleansing. Nineteenth-century critics of Shakespeare said that his plays were like the facts of nature, and though this statement has no intellectual content it does imply something concerning that attitude which we adopt toward "Mourning Becomes Electra" as well as toward Shakespeare. Our arguments and our analyses are unimportant as long as we attempt to discover in them the secret of our interest. What we do is merely to accept these fables as though they were facts and sit amazed by the height and the depth of human passions, by the grandeur and meanness of human deeds. Perhaps no one knows exactly what it means to be "purged by pity and terror," but for that very reason, perhaps, one returns to the phrase.

To find in the play any lack at all one must compare it with the very greatest works of dramatic literature, but when one does compare it with "Hamlet" or "Macbeth" one realizes that it does lack just one thing and that that thing is language—words as thrilling as the action which accompanies them. Take, for example, the scene in which Orin (Orestes) stands beside the bier of his father and apostrophizes the body laid there. No one can deny that the speech is a good one, but what one desires with an almost agonizing desire is something not merely good but something incredibly magnificent, something like "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow . . ." or "I could a tale unfold whose lightest word . . . ." If by some miracle such words could come, the situation would not be unworthy of them. Here is a scenario to which the most soaring eloquence and the most profound poetry are appropriate, and if it were granted us we should be swept aloft as no Anglo-Saxon audience since Shakespeare's time has had an opportunity to be. But no modern is capable of language really worthy of O'Neill's play, and the lack of that one thing is the penalty we must pay for living in an age which is not equal to more than prose. Nor is it to be supposed that I make this reservation merely for the purpose of saying that Mr. O'Neill's play is not so good as the best of Shakespeare; I make it, on the contrary, in order to indicate where one must go in order to find a worthy comparison.

Space is lacking to pay fitting tribute to the production and acting of the play. It must suffice to say that both they and the setting do it justice. Both Nazimova as Christine (Clytemnestra) and Alice Brady as Lavinia (Electra) contribute performances hardly less notable in their own way than the play, and, indeed, everyone concerned in the production may be said to share somewhat in the achievement. "Mourning Becomes Electra" reads well; when it comes to life on the stage of the Guild Theater it is no less than tremendous.

Joseph Wood Krutch

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Within the Fortnight on opposite page

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From the Heart of Germany

By WILLIAM HARLAN HALE

Weimar, Thuringia, September 15

WHEN you leave Berlin, with its political demonstrations, its daily tides of overheated newspapers, and its legions of glittering policemen murderously armed to the teeth, and come here to Weimar, you go into a sort of retirement. It is traditional that in this town of hallowed past the present world and its troubles should become unreal. You are expected to forget Hoover, unemployment, long-term credits, and Laval; the only world here traditionally considered real is the world of Goethe, Schiller, and their circle of poets, musicians, and brilliant amateurs. When great change strikes thoughtful Germany it comes last to Weimar, where the fascination of the past is still most vivid.

Now it has come to Weimar; the fever of confusion and despair has left no locality untouched. Start talking, even here, to the kindly people who sit next to you in a small restaurant, or on the terrace of the Belvedere palace, or in the park that Goethe so superbly laid out; you hear, over and over, "It can't go on." You might expect this in the centers of political agitation; it surprises you in the woodlands of Thuringia.

"It can't go on." The country is nearing the point where disaster is inevitable. An intelligent merchant here gave me the simile: Germany is like a formerly well-to-do citizen whose income enabled him to maintain a high standard of life. His income began to decline, but his whole arrangement of life forced him to keep the standard as high as before. His income dropped more rapidly; he had to borrow, he fell into an accumulation of debts, he had to borrow again. His intentions were of the best, but his vision was naturally limited and he could not see into the future. He trusted in a coming change for the better; he adhered to his old standard; and in order to get more credits he had to falsify the statements of his resources. He was not dishonest, he was merely blinded by himself and by circumstances. He could no longer pay the interest; his creditors realized that he could never pay back the capital. There was no way out of the collapse.

This is the national process: the growing unreality of wealth. Germany is surviving only on the basis of foreign capital; this can be withdrawn and the entire economic system wrecked in two weeks. There is no reliance to be placed on such an order. The structure of capitalism here is becoming, day by day, more wobbly. You stand by in a horrible fascination against the moment when the building will come crashing down with a great roar of bursting stone and timber. What is apparent even to the visitor in a German city is the fact that the middle class is dramatically on the point of vanishing. Every month thousands of people who traditionally belonged to that class—teachers, small professional men, shopkeepers, officials—are falling into the sea of the proletariat. When the factor is unemployment, that change is automatic and in its speed remorseless. When the factor is taxation, the change is more gradual but no less inevitable. There are thousands of trained officials in Germany who receive less than $500 a year. There are city doctors and sanitary officials who earn far below $1,000. Taxes, in no less than twenty varieties, remove about 50 per cent of these sums. A new ordinance places a fine of 5 per cent for every two weeks' delay in payment of taxes beyond the stated quarterly date. The fine adds up mechanically to 130 per cent a year. The man who cannot pay his taxes on the appointed day is sooner or later lost. As the percentages on his payments roll up, his doom is sealed. Bankruptcy before the state naturally includes a surrender of real property; and with such Draconian mechanics proceeds the transition from landed middle class to shiftless proletariat.

Let no one imagine that the Prussian referendum of August 9 meant that the German people had discarded the intentions of radicalism. The referendum was followed in a few days by announcements of cuts of 15 or 20 per cent in the already pathetically slender salaries of thousands of officials. Extensive reductions in the salaries of all public-school teachers are being considered. In the finest shopping streets in Berlin—the Friedrichstrasse and the Leipzigerstrasse—hundreds of thousands of square feet of select store and office space stand vacant. The *Wohnungsnot* of three years ago has so completely disappeared that the best modern co-operative settlements cannot begin to rent their flats—while in Berlin alone no fewer than 125,000 families are living in huts and tents in what are euphemistically called "orchard colonies." The dreaded *Hauszinssteuer* exacts ruinous tribute from all owners of occupied premises. The burden is so great that property values are virtually vanishing, since almost no buyer can afford to pay from $1,000 to $8,000 a year tax on his city house or country estate. The best homes are being deserted by their inhabitants just for the sake of spiting the government and preventing it from getting the taxes due. High mortgages on the finest metropolitan houses bring nothing but catastrophe when the sale value declines from $100,000 in 1916 to $15,000 in 1931. But with the doubling and tripling of taxes and the dizzy decline of wages and land values, there has been no adequate fall in the cost of living. Within the year the price of bread has risen 250 per cent. These facts and situations do not discourage radicalism. They do not on the long term inspire enthusiasm for the existing order and the present government. The defeat of radical elements on August 9 was the expression of a popular desire for peace and order in a moment of utmost international crisis; the more thoughtful elements of the German nation dominated. But what was support for August 9 did not mean support for 1932 and thereafter.

To a foreign observer (who has no political passions one way or the other) there is manifest among even the higher middle groups of society an increasing skepticism of German social democracy. It is not merely a dislike for, or an indignation against, the party now in power; it is doubt as to the efficacy of the whole system. In point of fact, one hears few grave charges against the government; usually they are those of local extravagance or bureaucratic duplication, not

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those of corruption or hopeless blunder of policy. The admiration for Dr. Brüning as a man of heroic calm and courageous decision penetrates deep into the camp of his political opponents. No, it is skepticism about the present social democracy that one feels. Deeper than that, it is skepticism about the capitalist system. When Germany hears that America is menaced by 8,000,000 unemployed, is shutting down its most famous factories and letting its finest crops go to waste, it begins to feel that little help will come from us, that with all our notorious wealth we are no longer in a position to help. When Germany observes the failure of English exports to compete in the very colonies with the goods of China and Japan, when it sees the sacred pound sterling go wavering, when it realizes that England lost its war, it begins to doubt the potency of that much-advertised Anglo-German friendship. The people are being slowly and painfully convinced, after the short hysterical enthusiasm over the "Hoover year," that the outside nations will do little for them. Self-help, they are told, must be the program. And when even the vast capitalist strengths of England and America cannot succeed in keeping their own houses in order, what chance is there for weak and tubercular Germany to accomplish that for herself?

There are, as is known, two ways out: Hitler's nationalism, and communism of the Russian brand. Both ideals are represented in Germany by powerful parties backed with considerable funds, able propaganda agents, and trained shock troops and marksmen. Young Germany is choosing between one and the other. Young Germany knows only this one thing: it will not follow the ways of its fathers, it will not pay reparations. The young men had nothing to do with the war, and they will not pay for it. They possess no accumulated wealth or inheritances which could prompt them to cling to the present order, with its moderate safety, rather than fly to revolution and financial crash. They have nothing to lose, and everything to gain, in an overthrow. What they have now is training, and no jobs; a very real Germanic strength, and nothing to apply it to. Over-mature for their years, and over-nervous and highstrung in their personalities, they are determined to carry through some reform which might make their lives worth living. Above all, I repeat: they will not pay reparations.

The feeling that despite all the nice words of friendly diplomats Germany is after all isolated in the midst of a hopelessly nationalist Europe has spread deep since the polite refusal of long-term credits. It is not only a doubt of capitalist organization that is growing in Germany; it is a doubt of the competency of international agencies to effect changes and reliefs. To realize that a small group of French patriot financiers could prevent the advancing of American credits, could take the teeth out of the Hoover proposal, and chase horrid fear into the hearts of Englishmen through a system of international gold drainage is to recognize the supreme power of one bitter nation to cancel the friendly attempts of all others. This French denial of international cooperation has naturally increased the validity of militant German nationalism; how far it has intensified the hatred against France I need not say. Indeed, all the eager urging of the German press toward a rapprochement between the two nations seems as idle beating of the journalistic air. The Germans are not for a moment deceived; they know perfectly well that French policy demands a supine Germany, and that French power

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resides solely in the assurance of that condition. This bald and undenied fact alone kills any popular desire for hand-shaking across the Rhine.

Thus Germany confesses itself to be in a state of siege. The nation stands alone, and it feels its own foundations slowly weakening under it. It is the sick man of Europe—and its illness is the destiny of our civilization. With the most compelling line of forts in the world on one border, and the most compelling system of social reform in the world on the other, there is not much deep reality in the cutaway charms of Mr. MacDonald or the laconic visits of Mr. Stimson accompanied by Andy Mellon.

To reduce the German situation to such essentials as these is not to be a professional alarmist; it is merely to admit what everyone realizes today but often likes to gloss over in silence. It is merely to take as basic what the whole world is feeling—skepticism of the power of international accords to cope with the forces of nationalism, French Caesarism, and the eternal hunger for war. It is to take as basic also a greater feeling—the doubt of the capitalist world, the insecurity, the weariness.

There are bright sides to the possibilities of a Communist Germany: the new order, with a program of central planning and administrative reform, would surely bring about an improvement in those domestic conditions which are now becoming insufferable. Communism regnant in Germany would assuredly not extinguish the country's disinterested world of scholarship and art and scientific research; would not submerge the entire population into an undifferentiated mass-existence; would probably not even begin in especially vicious bloodshed. Communism in Germany would have to adapt itself to a different plane of culture from that in Russia; for the German mind is modern, while the Russian may be said to be medieval.

Leaving aside all commercial considerations, there is a chief political reason to be fearful of a Communist Germany. The new order would carry with it the threat of a war to the end with France. What coordinate events and what consequences such a day would bring is in the power of no man to imagine.

And so, when I listened to a thoughtful German speak, as the sun went down beyond the gentle valley where Bach wrote his organ works, Goethe rounded out his "Faust," Schiller first produced his dramas, and a hundred other preachers, poets, artists, and philosophers have performed their living work—when I listened to him speak of the cold inevitability of a conclusion, of an entire recommencement, and of a war, I found that not even here, above the silent town, was there any escape to be found from the rising tides that beat on the shores today.

Contributors to This Issue

STUART CHASE's latest book is "Mexico: A Study of Two Americas."

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